

ANGELA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE MINISTRY OF CLERGY OF
ENGAGING IN CREATIVE REPAIR ACTIVITIES IN A GROUP?

ANNE C. HOLMES

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

Submitted: March 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all those who have helped, supported and encouraged me during this professional doctorate:

The Revd Dr Jane Leach, my first supervisor, for her insight, depth of knowledge and critical thinking and for the support and encouragement she has given me throughout the research process.

Dr Zoë Bennett, my second supervisor and Director of the Professional Doctorate programme, for her guidance, wisdom, encouragement and support throughout the process.

Professor Vernon Trafford, friend of the doctoral programme, for his enthusiasm, encouragement and advice.

The research participants who gave their time and were willing to share with me their experience of creative repair in a group.

My clinical supervisor, Mrs Sheila Mackintosh Millard and the many colleagues and friends with whom I have shared conversations and who have supported me for the last six years.

My friend Trisha Dale for proofreading all the papers, including this thesis, and for helping me with technical matters.

Sister Paula, Abbess, and the Sisters of the Community of St Clare, with whom I currently worship.

Close friends who have variously encouraged, fed and prayed with and for me throughout this process, especially Pat, Marilyn, Cathy, Alison, Becky, Sue and Wendy.

My son, Simon, and daughter-in-law, Kate; my daughter, Rachel, and son-in-law, Mark, and their families. Also my sister, Jennifer, and brother-in-law, John, and my nephew, Philip.

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE MINISTRY OF CLERGY OF ENGAGING IN
CREATIVE REPAIR ACTIVITIES IN A GROUP?

ANNE C. HOLMES

March 2018

This thesis investigates the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair in a group. It is a continuation of earlier research in which I adopted the expression *creative repair* to explain the role of the creative arts in preventing clergy burnout. My earlier research focused on the role of the creative arts in recharging clergy as their resources are depleted in offering pastoral care. In this project I have sought to enhance an understanding of *creative repair* by identifying the role of groups and regular practice in supporting clergy routinely. This involved expanding the conceptual framework to include group and rule of life as well as creative repair.

A small-scale study method was adopted using purposive sampling. I invited four Anglican incumbents to be interviewed, each of whom was engaged in a creative group. The four participants were taken from different parts of my own diocese. They represented different parish settings, comprised two men and two women and were engaged in different types of creative groups. The interview transcripts were coded, the codes grouped into categories and themes identified.

The evidence indicates that the practice of creative repair in a group sustained routinely the ministry of my participants; it was beneficial for their psychological health and self-care; and it enhanced the confidence of the female participants; it supported role flexibility in all participants through allowing them to move from the spotlight of leadership into a group in which they were a member; and it gave a sense of belonging beyond the parish. The fact that the participants were aware of the impact of routine engagement in their creative groups upon their psychological health and of the impact of not doing so underlined the benefit of practising creative repair regularly and indicated that creative groups could usefully be included in a personal rule of life.

The recommendations for practice arising from the research include an informal assessment of the way in which clergy routinely resource themselves, the encouragement of clergy to be members of groups outside of their parishes and the addition of creative repair to a personal rule of life.

Key words: ministry, *creative repair*, group, rule of life

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Appendices	vi
Copyright Declaration	vii
<i>Prelude: from grief to creativity</i>	1
1 Beginnings	2
Introduction	2
Introducing the thesis	2
Research design	4
Professional and research context	4
Originality of the research and contribution to knowledge	5
Overview of the thesis	6
2 Conceptual framework	8
Introduction	8
Creative repair	8
Group	14
Rule of life	16
<i>Well-being</i>	19
<i>Balance</i>	20
<i>Time wisdom</i>	23
Conclusion	24
3 Research methodology	26
Introduction	26
Methodological approach and research design	26
Locating the study within practical theology	27
Epistemological considerations	29
Qualitative methodology	32
A small-scale research project	33
Ethical considerations	34
Methods	34
Conclusion	37

4 Factual findings	39
Introduction	39
My participants	39
<i>Participant A</i>	39
<i>Participant B</i>	40
<i>Participant C</i>	40
<i>Participant D</i>	40
Coding the interview transcripts	41
From coding to categories	42
From categories to themes	43
<i>Question 1 What are the drivers for creative repair?</i>	44
<i>Question 2 What are the blocks to creative repair?</i>	47
<i>Question 3: What are the perceived benefits of</i> <i>creative repair?</i>	48
<i>Question 4: What is the impact of creative repair?</i>	52
<i>Question 5: Who or what supports creative repair?</i>	56
<i>Question 6: What is the role of the group in</i> <i>creative repair?</i>	58
The themes	60
Conclusion	61
5 Discussion and interpretation of themes	62
Introduction	61
My practice	62
Theme 1: The impact on the participants of their role and sense of vocation	63
Theme 2: The importance of creativity	74
Theme 3: The importance of rhythm and self-discipline	82
Theme 4: The participants' flexibility in a leadership role	86
Theme 5: The participants' attachment to their creativity groups	89
Conclusion	93
6 Conclusions: creative repair, the significance of participation in a group and the rule of life	94
Introduction	94

Creative repair	94
<i>Psychological health and self-care</i>	95
<i>Confidence and having a voice</i>	98
<i>Reflection and theological reflection</i>	102
<i>Conclusions</i>	106
Group	107
<i>The therapeutic value of being in a group</i>	107
<i>Figure/ground and a flexible mind-set</i>	108
<i>Attachment to a group</i>	111
<i>Conclusions</i>	114
Rule of life	114
<i>Regularity and intentionality</i>	115
<i>Beginnings and the establishment of sustainable habits</i>	116
<i>Imitating the patterns of Jesus</i>	117
<i>Conclusions</i>	119
Conclusion	119
7 Impact of findings on practice and dissemination of findings	121
Introduction	121
The professional practice to which I am contributing	121
The impact of the findings on my own practice	122
Ways in which my findings might influence future practice	124
<i>Creative repair</i>	124
<i>Group</i>	125
<i>Rule of life</i>	127
Ways of disseminating the findings	128
<i>Publications</i>	128
<i>Relating to authorities</i>	128
<i>Ministry training and theological reflection</i>	129
<i>Further research</i>	129
<i>Continuing to develop practice</i>	130
Conclusion	130
8 Conclusions	132
Introduction	132

Summary of findings	133
Contribution to knowledge and practice	133
<i>Contribution to knowledge</i>	133
<i>Contribution to practice</i>	134
Limitations of the research	134
Conclusion	135
<i>Postlude: from creative repair to figure/ground play</i>	137
References	138
Appendix A: Professional Doctorate Paper 1	147
Appendix B: Professional Doctorate Paper 2	169
Appendix C: Professional Doctorate Paper 3	198
Appendix D: Participation Information Sheet	220
Appendix E: Participation Consent Form	221
Appendix F: Questions for semi-structured interviews with clergy participants	223
Appendix G: Categories drawn from initial codes	225

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

Attention is drawn to the fact that copyright of this thesis rests with

Anne C. Holmes

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is bound by copyright.

Prelude: from grief to creativity

The story of this research began in France on 19 August 2007. It was the day on which the ashes of my former husband were to be scattered off Spithead, as he had requested before his death. As he had remarried, it was not appropriate for me to be there. I was in my holiday cottage in north Burgundy, intentionally reflecting on our marriage and honouring the happier times. One of our common interests had been a love of music, especially choral church music and organ music. I was listening to a recording of organ music and recognising that this music stretched back to the beginning of my life. My father was an Anglican priest and church musician, having played the organ for services since the age of thirteen. Among my earliest memories are those of him playing the piano as I went to sleep: Bach preludes and fugues, Beethoven sonatas and various pieces by Brahms and Chopin. As I thought about him, I realised that his music was both a release and a resource to him as he never talked about the various pastoral encounters of his ministry. Gradually, as I grieved and reflected, the idea of the role of the creative arts in the restoration of energy expended in pastoral care came to me.

My theoretical paper for my qualifying course as a group analyst had been on the subject of creative block and the psychoanalytic thinking which informed the connection between blocked or arrested grief and blocked creativity. Seeking a topic for the dissertation which was the final part of my MA in Pastoral Theology, the idea of *creative repair* began to form in my mind. Had my father intuitively known that music was the safe container for both personal difficulties and the emotional demands of being a priest? I knew that his childhood was difficult, that he would rarely speak of his experience as an RAF chaplain in the Far East during the Second World War and that he had the unpleasant task of exposing and bringing to justice the perpetrators of a paedophile ring in one of his parishes. He had played the organ in church and the piano in jazz bands as a young man and throughout his life played both instruments until his last years. He worked hard but never experienced burnout. I set out to explore the idea and this study represents my most recent exploration of the role of creativity in the sustaining of ministry.

1 Beginnings

Introduction

This thesis investigates the role of creative repair in a group in sustaining ministry. Beginning with the origins of this research, I indicate the gap in knowledge which I have identified. As it is a continuation of my MA research, I summarise that and the exploration continued in Stage One of the Professional Doctorate. This includes a shift in thinking and the process by which I identified my research question. After a short summary of the research design, I introduce myself, describe my professional context, identify the research context and name the practice to which this research is addressed. After indicating the originality of the research, I conclude the chapter with an overview of the content of the thesis by summarising each of the subsequent chapters.

Introducing the thesis

This thesis investigates the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair in a group. At the time of writing my MA dissertation I identified a gap in the literature around the resourcing of those who minister. As long ago as 1989 Coate identified particular stressors which affect those in religious ministry, drawing attention to the need for more psychological understanding in ministry selection and training. More recently, clergy stress has been described as a 'widespread, deep-rooted and growing problem' (Lee and Horsman, 2002, Introduction). One example of the concern amongst the churches is the report on ministerial well-being presented to the 2013 British Methodist Conference (Tidey, 2013).

For some years I have been concerned about the problem of clergy stress. Stress which continues unattended over a substantial period of time can lead to burnout. Exploring this further in support of my MA in Pastoral Theology I focused on the possibility that clergy who engage in the creative arts in a regular way may either prevent their levels of stress from building up to burnout or help them to recover from the experience of burnout. Participants were invited to answer a set of relevant questions either by e-mail or by taking part in a recorded, live, group discussion set up on group-analytic principles. Both sets of responses confirmed my belief in the prophylactic value of regular engagement with the creative arts as a contribution to

the prevention of clergy burnout. This was written up in both the dissertation (Holmes, A.C. 2009b) and a subsequent journal article (Holmes, A.C. 2011).

Drawing on the therapeutic value of the creative arts and the psychoanalytic idea of the repair of a damaged object, I adopted the expression *creative repair*. My analysis supported the idea that clergy engagement with the creative arts could restore the energy used in sensitive pastoral care. The identification and naming of this idea represented an original contribution to the discussion, which I documented in both the *Church Times* (Holmes, A.C. 2009a) and later in the journal *Practical Theology* (Holmes, A.C. 2011).

This doctoral study is a continuation of the MA research. Following the MA, I conducted various workshops on *creative repair* in several settings. Feedback from these alerted my curiosity about the possibility that guilt was a block to the practice of creative repair. In the first stage of the professional doctorate, I explored this further. As a way of considering different types of guilt, a complex emotion, I engaged in a cross-disciplinary critical conversation with the work of the practical theologian Pattison, focusing on his book *Shame* (2000), in which he explored the nature of shame, a similar complex emotion. As a result of this, I came to the conclusion that there was common ground between Pattison's understanding of shame and the psychoanalytic understanding of persecutory guilt (Paper 1, Appendix A).

Next, in order to test out whether or not guilt was a block to the practice of creative repair by clergy, I designed a small research study combining the completion of a questionnaire with a focus group of participants chosen by the method of purposive sampling (Paper 2, Appendix B). Having analysed the data from the small focus group, I concluded that, for that group of clergy, it was not the case that guilt was a primary block to the practice of creative repair. This was partly because they had modified a childhood template which had previously reinforced feelings of guilt. What did emerge from the focus group was the need for affirmation and the role of others in supporting their practice of creative repair.

In order to take my thinking further, I engaged in a series of informal conversations with a variety of Anglican Christians who were interested in my research, as I have recorded in a previous paper (Paper 3, Appendix C, pp.203-204). The aim of these conversations was twofold: to invite my conversation partners to react to my

research so far and to create an open space in which they could engage in dialogue in the moment. The conversations were helpful and acted as a kind of transitional space (Winnicott, 1971, p.41) in which my thinking shifted substantially. Earlier my research had concentrated on an individual's practice of creative repair and the emphasis had been on the prevention of burnout. As a group analyst I had registered the focus-group members' reference to the importance of others, so that I now thought about the role of a group in the practice of creative repair. In addition I became interested in the rhythm of creative repair and its possible role in the *sustaining* of ministry rather than the prevention of burnout.

As a result of the conversations, the earlier focus group which had explored the role of guilt in the practice of creative repair, and subsequent thinking, I honed my research question so that it became:

What is the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in *creative repair* activities in a group?

Research design

Conceptually, in addition to the core concept of *creative repair*, I have drawn on my understanding of the importance of a *group*; the third concept arises from the intuition that discipline is needed if clergy are to sustain their ministry routinely. I root this discipline in the monastic practice of following a *rule of life*. This framework offers a triple lens through which to view the data.

Methodologically I have located my study within practical theology which is multivalent and can be conceived broadly (Miller-McLemore, 2012). As practical theology welcomes a dialogue between key theological resources – scripture, tradition and experience – and disciplines such as psychology and other social sciences, it is the ideal discipline in which to locate my research into the practices of clergy. Having chosen the qualitative research method of a small-scale research project, using purposive sampling, I conducted four recorded semi-structured interviews, which I have transcribed, analysed and interpreted.

Having interpreted the data I return to the three concepts and comment on the way in which the data relates to each of them. This has helped to identify my contribution to knowledge and the implications for practice.

Professional and research context

Currently I combine the disciplines of group-analytic psychotherapist and Anglican priest. I have worked as a psychodynamic counsellor for thirty years, group analyst for over twenty years and was ordained 15 years ago. My private practice includes clinical work with individuals and couples. In addition I offer pastoral supervision and spiritual accompaniment to both lay and ordained Christians. My group-analytic work includes facilitating staff groups within the National Health Service (NHS) and ministry settings.

The context of my research is currently that of clergy in the Church of England. Although there are implications beyond this denomination both within Christianity and other faith contexts, I am an Anglican priest and have no deep knowledge of other denominations. The bishop of my diocese supported the research and acted as a gate-keeper to my participants for this study.

The practice to which this research is addressed has three dimensions. First, it is applicable to clergy themselves who have a responsibility to sustain their psychological health; second, it is addressed to all those who support clergy as spiritual directors, mentors, pastoral supervisors, counsellors and psychotherapists; third, it is addressed to those involved in forming and training clergy who might help them to establish sustainable habits at the beginning of ministry.

Originality of the research and contribution to knowledge

The originality of my research lies partly in the concept of *creative repair*, partly in my application of group analysis to the practice of creative repair and partly in the focus on clergy and their ministry. As an Anglican Franciscan tertiary for over thirty years, I am familiar with the idea of a rule of life as a framework for trying to live a faithful Christian life. It is my belief that a combination of personal circumstances, professional training and clinical experience puts me in a particular position to bring together the ideas supporting my research question. In addition to the concept of creative repair, my work as a group-analytic psychotherapist and as an Anglican priest offering at different times individual psychotherapy, clinical and pastoral supervision and spiritual direction has allowed me to reflect on ways in which ministry can be sustained by practising creative repair either individually or alongside others.

There is considerable literature about the theology of the arts (e.g. Harries, 1993; Nichols, 2007; Illman and Smith, 2013) but, to my knowledge, the creative arts have not been focused on in the context of sustaining ministry. As my first focus was on the role of the creative arts in the prevention of accumulated stress leading to clergy burnout in an individual context, I am building on the earlier research by exploring the practice of creative repair in a group.

The originality of my contribution to knowledge lies in the particular bringing together of the following: concepts drawn from literature on the therapeutic value of the arts; group analysis and Christian experience; idiographic knowledge gained through the collection and analysis of qualitative research data; and extensive clinical practice. All this is located within the discipline of practical theology.

Overview of the thesis

In Chapter 2, the three key concepts which have framed my approach to the study are introduced. They are: creative repair, group, and rule of life. This includes considering what it might mean to practise creative repair in a group. The value of regularity in the practice of creative repair is indicated and the possibility of including creative repair in a rule of life.

In Chapter 3, I explain the methodology and methods used in my research. After locating the study in practical theology and discussing epistemological considerations and qualitative methodology, I explain my choice of a small-scale research project and the particular methods used in order to gather and analyse data.

In Chapter 4, having introduced my participants, I explain my method for analysing the data, using eclectic coding. Moving from coding to categories which are interrogated, responses are drawn which are grouped and presented with quotations from the data. Five themes are identified and named.

In Chapter 5, the five themes are interpreted in the light of the literature discussed earlier, my practice and further literature. This is preceded by a brief description of relevant aspects of my practice.

In Chapter 6, I return to my original concepts of creative repair, group, and rule of life; and comment on the way in which the data relates to each of them in turn. I indicate that all three have been expanded by the evidence of the data.

In Chapter 7, I describe the professional practice to which my research is making a contribution, indicate ways in which the findings have already influenced my own current practice and consider key ways in which they might influence future practice. Various ways in which the findings may be disseminated are suggested.

In Chapter 8, I present the conclusions of my research. The reader is reminded of the choice of research topic and what it sought to discover; how it was designed and undertaken and the research boundaries. The factual, interpretive and conceptual findings are summarised and any future research indicated. The contribution to knowledge is articulated.

2 Conceptual Framework

Introduction

As this thesis investigates the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair in a group, it is important that I make explicit what I mean by 'creative repair' in the context of ministry and what might be gained by practising it in a group. In this chapter, I consider the three key concepts which have framed my approach to the study. First, I introduce and develop the concept of creative repair. Second, I explain my concept of a group and its application to creative repair. Third, I introduce and explain the concept of a rule of life, drawing on the Christian monastic tradition and my experience of Franciscan spirituality. A key resource for this conceptual framework is my experience as a group-analytic psychotherapist working with individuals, couples and groups in a variety of public-sector and private settings.

Creative repair

Creative repair is regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing energy expended in sensitive pastoral care (Holmes, A.C. 2011, p.77). The idea combines the psychoanalytic idea of *repair*, in a here-and-now encounter, of the damage done to the psyche in formative relationships on the one hand (Klein, 1992, p.265; Sayers, 2000, pp.61-63) and the capacity of the *creative* arts to restore emotional and psychological energy on the other (Kramer, 2000).

The first part of this doctoral study developed from my previous experience of conducting workshops on creative repair with groups of clergy and ordinands. Participants indicated that they felt guilty if they attended to their own needs instead of those of others. In Paper 1 I engaged in a critical conversation with the practical theologian Pattison, especially his book *Shame* (2000). Having begun by disagreeing with his use of guilt as a way of defining shame, I came to the conclusion that, if his understanding of guilt were to be expanded to include persecutory or chronic guilt, then there was a meeting point between chronic shame and persecutory guilt. Both undermine a person's capacity to be creative and both may originate in relational difficulties going back to early life (see Paper 1, Appendix A, p.166).

In order to test out the possibility of guilt as a block to creative repair, I designed a qualitative study with a purposive sample of volunteer clergy using a questionnaire and a focus group. Having analysed the data, I concluded that the evidence of the study indicated that, for that particular group of clergy, guilt was not a significant factor preventing their practice of creative repair (see Paper 2, Appendix B, p.188). After reflecting on this, in order to discern a way forward, I conducted various informal conversations with a variety of people interested in what I am seeking to explore. This part of my research journey is described in Paper 3 (Appendix C, pp.203-204).

As a result of the earlier research and the informal conversations my thinking has changed to focus on the impact which creative repair practised in a group might have on ministry. Before discussing this further, I would like to consider what is meant by the reparative aspect of the creative arts. In order to illustrate this, I have chosen a few examples from the substantial literature on the therapeutic value of the arts, each of which is drawn from either the work of specialist art therapy or the more informal, recorded experience of individuals using the arts to restore depleted aspects of themselves. In addition, I have cited anonymised examples from my clinical experience and included my own practice of creative repair.

The capacity for human beings to symbolise is ancient, as cave paintings such as those of Lascaux have shown us (Gombrich, 1953). Ancient texts from many cultures indicate the importance of poetry, music and dance.

The urge to make and enjoy art seems to be universal: the impulse to scratch out images on stone walls, revel in the delight of notes strung together, shape and re-shape words into patterns and so on. (Begbie 2001, p.xi)

Narrative and story-telling have long been means for the recalling of past events, whether individual or collective. In addition to the creative arts, human capacity to symbolise is experienced in dreams and day-dreams, as evidenced by Freud (1991) and successive psychoanalysts. In particular Segal focused on the importance of symbol formation (Segal, 1986).

The value of the creative arts in repairing wounded psyches has been evidenced at a professional level by the development of branches of psychotherapy which have become established disciplines in their own right. These include art therapy, music

therapy and drama therapy. In an earlier paper, I have drawn on the work of the art therapist Kramer and her colleagues as described in her key text *Art as Therapy* (2000), as an example of art therapy (Paper 3, Appendix C). This text includes her focus on the inner unity of process and art product 'with its miraculously integrating effects on the creator' (Gerity, 2000a, p.10).

Such an 'integrating effect' can also be experienced by those who are not art therapy patients as such, but who choose to practise one of the creative arts. One of my patients volunteered that she was about to set up a small studio in her home, so that she could work with clay, commenting: 'When I am working with the clay I am completely absorbed in it', so that she has respite from her other preoccupations following a relationship break-up. Art is a place not only of respite from her emotional pain and loss of self-esteem, but also a place in which she can be absorbed in the exploration of her own creativity, a place of integrity away from the wound. This illustrates Gerity's recognition of the therapeutic value of working with clay for those with difficult personal histories, who 'while using clay were also clearly working on integration, feelings of wholeness and well-being' (2000b, p.235).

The idea of respite from a place of grief is crucial to my concept of creative repair. By entering into a creative space, whether as a maker or through the active, participatory appreciation of a work of art, we can repair some of the damage incurred in painful experiences. It can also be a means of preventing the build-up of emotional and psychological fatigue as experienced by those working with the terminally ill or offering pastoral care as part of ministry. This was evident when I was supervising NHS staff working with the terminally ill. When invited to think about what gave them respite from the intensity of their work, they initially found it hard to take their own needs as seriously as they took those of their patients. Later on in the work, having identified specific ways in which they resourced themselves, they usually reported that they had found their work more sustainable.

Engagement in the creative arts can also offer another perspective which can give respite to the overloaded or hurting self. One witness to the reparative value of painting was Sir Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister during the Second World War, who has written about his own struggle with depression, his 'Black Dog' to which Lord Moran referred in his biography (Storr, 1997, p.16). He discovered the reparative value of creativity when he began painting at the age of 40. It became the

hobby that meant most to him. He has written of his experience of 1915 when he was powerless to prevent the unfolding world war:

At a moment when every fibre of my being was inflamed to action, I was forced to remain a spectator of the tragedy... And then it was that the Muse of Painting came to my rescue – out of charity and out of chivalry, because after all she had nothing to do with me – and said, ‘Are these toys any good to you? They amuse some people.’ (Churchill, 1932, pp.37-38)

Later on in the same text he explained something of the process of what I would now call creative repair:

Painting is complete as a distraction. I know of nothing which, without exhausting the body, more entirely absorbs the mind. Whatever the worries of the hour or the threats of the future, once the picture has begun to flow along, there is no room for them in the mental screen. They pass out into shadow and darkness. All one’s mental light, such as it is, becomes concentrated on the task. (Churchill, 1932, pp.85-86)

The opportunity to lose oneself in a creative act gives respite or solace to the hurting or anxious self.

So far I have focused on the therapeutic power of art. As a Franciscan I discern the presence of God in all of creation so that it comes naturally to extend this to creativity as expressed in the arts. My own experience of creative repair is through music, which I interpret as part of God’s work of emotional and spiritual renewal. In the past I have sung in choirs and accompanied some services on whatever keyboard was available. Currently this takes the form of regular singing lessons and I am a participant in my teacher’s research into the ageing voice. Through her I was invited to speak to the British Voice Association about creative repair in January 2016. There was a lively discussion and it was recognised that singing teachers find themselves offering pastoral care to those whom they teach. The discussion clarified the recognition that those involved professionally in one branch of the arts also need to repair their emotional energy in another form of creativity. As part of my own creative repair, in addition to my singing lessons which are always restorative, I listen regularly to the radio and try to hear live choral music or chamber music when I can, especially that of J.S. Bach, whose music ‘is a sound-world that in its scale

and depth accompanies us on a profound spiritual and musical journey' (Winkett, 2010, p.22).

Another part of my own creative repair has been a love of choral church music. Not only did I grow up in a musical household but, thanks to my brother being a chorister at King's College Cambridge, as a child I travelled with the family every three weeks to visit him and listen to Choral Evensong. This exposed me to a healing aesthetic which did much to alleviate difficult school experiences. Music has always been associated with worship, as there are references to it in the Hebrew scriptures, especially the psalms, and various Christian denominations have a long tradition of liturgical music. Growing up I experienced tensions between my father, the vicar, who was also a gifted church musician, and at least one of the church organists. However, their shared Christian commitment to the importance of music enhancing the liturgy and the sheer beauty of the music in which they collaborated seemed to give them respite from their differences and raised the standard of church music in a working-class parish. Put theologically, 'the inherent spirituality at the heart of artistic experience calls persons from their own subjectivity to engage with another subject who sees the world differently from themselves' (Illman and Smith, 2013, p.59).

Creative repair restores expended emotional and psychological energy by means of the creative arts. One of the particular strengths of practising creative repair through music is the corporate aspect of singing in a choir or playing in a band or orchestra. A choral work with many parts like Tallis's 40-part motet *Spem in alium* brings together composer, singers and conductor, enabling the sound 'to rise and fall and for every voice to be heard' (Winkett, 2010, p.21). Listening to a recent performance of Bach's *St John Passion* in my local church, I was struck by several aspects of community coming together for the benefit of all present, whether performers or listeners. Not only were the choir, orchestra and soloists brought together by the conductor but many of those taking part were from the local village community, as were many of those listening attentively to their performance. The experience of the music can transcend any tensions or differences between the people involved.

This sense of a musical community connects with the growth of choirs across social contexts inspired by the work of the musician Malone who works hard to build up the confidence of his singers. Reflecting on the performance of the choir of South Oxney, Hertfordshire, in St Alban's Cathedral, he comments: 'The cathedral echoed

with the voices of ordinary men and women and, to me, there was something heavenly about that' (Malone, 2012, p.140).

Skilled conductors and band leaders are able to bring disparate people, voices and instruments together. During a performance those listening engage in active participation to complete the whole live experience. There is a timelessness about the experience. The Greeks have two words for time: *chronos* or 'clock time' and *kairos* or 'opportunity time' (Cherry, 2013, p.14). The *chronos* of the actual date and time of the event is the conduit for God's time or *kairos* in an often sublime experience. It is hard to describe its effect as, like art and dance, it engages us in non-verbal ways, one of the 'characteristic immediacies... of created forms in poetics and the arts... very difficult to put into words' (Steiner, 1989, p.179).

At times of grief, many find that the contemplative aspect of much church music helps to contain and soothe the pain of loss. Chants – whether medieval, such as Gregorian, or modern, such as Taizé – facilitate reparative, meditative prayer. On 16 June 2016, the day that the Labour MP Jo Cox was murdered in Birstall, the chosen extract from the service of vigil broadcast on BBC Radio Four's *The World Tonight* was the Taizé chant, 'O Lord, hear my prayer.' It was as if the chant acted as a vehicle for the expression of unvoiced thoughts after the tragedy.

Participants in my MA research identified a range of theological resources when reflecting on their need to engage with the creative arts. Key among these were the psalms and especially Psalm 46:10: 'Be still and know that I am God', which pointed to the need to take time out, whether in retreat or for short periods, in order to be contemplative. One participant commented:

There's an attentiveness, whether it's a picture, a concert, a ballet, a book or whatever, which is my total giving of myself in that attention which itself becomes renewing because... it's actually renewing sources or ground, ground of being. (Holmes, A.C. 2009b, p.46)

Many believe that music has the power to engage the whole of us, 'thus representing us and in the process educating, shaping and reshaping us' (Begbie, 2008, p.304). My understanding is that this is part of the transformational potential of engaging in God's creativity.

Allowing ourselves to be drawn into the creative arts can be seen as handing ourselves over so that God can replenish us. The poet R.S. Thomas addresses God in his poem 'The Flower', reflecting on how God gave him so much in response to his request for riches. In order to take all this in, he is aware of the need to withdraw and give himself totally to the experience of God's regard and ends the poem: 'The soul grew in me, filling me with its fragrance' (1993, p.280). Not only does Thomas take in the beauty of the flower, but he also creates another expression of beauty in the form of his poem. By taking in beauty, whether in a work of art, a poem, a landscape or a flower, we are engaging with God, the source of all creativity, and repairing our own depleted energy.

Group

The reparative aspect of the creative arts is central to my concept of creative repair, whether practised individually or in a group. However, one of the themes which emerged in the focus group described in Paper 2 was the role of others in the practice of creative repair. The other or others might be a partner or a group (Paper 2, Appendix B, p.183). Reflecting on this, I remembered that my workshops were experienced as creative repair by the participants as a group in the here-and-now, but they were doubtful about their capacity to practise it when on their own in their parishes. As a group analyst, this alerted my curiosity. I have therefore applied my training and work as a group analyst to a non-clinical context.

A group is 'more than people who happen to be doing the same thing at the same time in the same place' (Barnes, Ernst and Hyde, 1999, p.2). 'A group is understood to be any number of people who interact with each other, are psychologically aware of each other and perceive themselves to be a group' (Stacey, 2003, p.68). What makes a group is the relationship between group members who have a connection, a common purpose or task. There is a difference between the pianist who practises alone and the choir or orchestra who rehearse together, albeit with the help of a conductor. The founder of group analysis, S.H. Foulkes, valued the term 'conductor' as an intentional reference to a musical conductor, who brings in each of the players or singers during the rehearsal or performance of a piece of music. This 'fluctuating location of authority between conductor and orchestra' (Behr and Hearst, 2005, p.7) also connects with another influential feature of the evolution of Foulkesian group analysis, the gestalt idea of figure/ground in which 'figures of interest emerge from and recede into an undifferentiated ground, like the relationship between a wave

and water' (Taylor, 2014, p.42). One of the core principles of group analysis is that the conductor is also a group member so that although the group conductor does not introduce personal material, s/he moves in and out of an active leadership mode, and the more the group members are able to offer reflections or raise questions to one another, the less the conductor needs to say. Unlike those approaches to groups which can set the leader and group in a more binary position (Bion, 1961), the group analyst, arguably like any competent psychotherapist, works in order to become redundant, when the useful way of thinking has become internalised.

Applying these ideas of a group conductor and figure/ground to creative repair in a group, I suggest that those clergy who are able to move between the leadership role of, say, conducting worship in the congregational group and the experience of being a member of a different group engaged in creative repair are likely to resource themselves both through the arts and by engagement with others. While I accept that some people find groups difficult, those with sufficient ego strength to benefit from the presence of others as they practise creative repair may find themselves resourced in subtle ways which enrich them socially as well as individually. For example, when out of their ministry role, they encounter others as co-creators in the context of the theatre or music group as they explore their creativity. This respite from the leadership role could be seen as a regular reminder that they do not need to be in charge all of the time.

In suggesting that there is value in letting go of a leadership role regularly and routinely, I am also drawing on my experience of conducting reflective staff groups within the NHS. Because I am employed to hold the boundaries of the group and facilitate the discussion, it becomes possible for the most junior member in the hierarchy to speak with candour to the most senior person present and vice versa. As the whole staff team are present and witness the encounters, reparation of previous hurts and misunderstandings can be experienced, even though there may be moments of discomfort. Often staff members are unsure of the value of the reflective practice group at first, but experience teaches them that it is valuable and restorative. Although a music, art or theatre group may not be set up as a direct emotional resource for participants, it offers the opportunity for mutuality. Further, I would argue that, *mutatis mutandis*, the 'in charge' self is able to have respite from leadership and benefit from the need to fit in with others for the sake of a creative whole.

Rule of life

My research question asks about the *impact on ministry* of clergy practising creative repair in a group. It explores the extent to which those who do join groups for their creative repair resource themselves for their ongoing ministry. An essential aspect of the practice of creative repair, which has been born out in all of my earlier research, is the importance of regularity or a rhythm. This might be a weekly or monthly arrangement or, as in the experience of one of my MA participants, an annual festival enjoyed as an intense experience over several days. This regularity could be a part of the discipline of a rule of life, which facilitates certain qualities. The particular qualities which I have chosen to discuss are *well-being*, *balance* and *time wisdom*. One possible outcome of my research is the inclusion of creative repair in a rule of life in order to embed it in the daily exercise of living the life of a faithful believer. While my particular perspective is that of an Anglican Franciscan, the principle could also be applied not only to other Christian denominations, but also to the faithful practice of a range of religious ways of life.

The monastic tradition represents long experience of living a rule of life in community. The historian MacCulloch has recorded that from the early third century CE, a time when the Church first attracted very large numbers of converts in society, solitary individuals (hermits) and then groups of men and women 'took the decision to defy what they saw as an increasingly compromising involvement in the life of the Roman Empire' (2004, p.28). This was a withdrawal in order to re-focus on a Gospel-based life. Although there is no biblical precedent for monasticism as such, the recorded withdrawal of Jesus from the crowds in order to pray alone or with one or two of his disciples (e.g. Mark 1:35) has modelled contemplative practice for successive generations of Christians. This movement between ministry and reflective practice, modelled by Jesus, connects with both my creative repair and figure/ground concepts. By withdrawing from the crowds in order to spend time with God alone or with one or two friends, Jesus was demonstrating the need to replenish the resources poured out in his healing and teaching ministry. By moving between his leadership role with the crowds and his quiet time with God, Jesus modelled the figure/ground flexibility of a life grounded in prayer. Those living a rule of life try to follow his example.

From a historical perspective, monasticism is not without its critics, especially when practice was not congruent with the ideals and principles of key founders such as St

Benedict and St Francis. Yet even though there have been times when monasticism was under attack, particularly during the dissolution of the monasteries in England and Wales in the sixteenth century CE, there have been subsequent revivals of the monastic life. For example, the Oxford Movement gave rise to a renewal of Anglican religious vocations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries CE. At first many followed the Benedictine path and the establishment of communities based on the Franciscan rule came later. However, by the end of the last century, the historian Petà Dunstan was able to state that the Society of St Francis was the largest religious community for men in the Church of England (1997, p.xv).

Those living a consecrated life in monastic communities pray at regular times each day. At other times they work either on their monastic land or in cottage industries attached to the monastic house. Thus they combine contemplative and active ways of living out their vocation. In an earlier paper, I considered the way in which the active and contemplative elements of a faithful Christian life were viewed in the early Church (see Paper 2, Appendix B, p.184-185). Whereas there had been a tendency to regard the contemplative life as eternal and superior to the temporal active life, a key contribution of Gregory the Great was to see them as complementary, with different stages of development leading to 'a union of the active and contemplative lives, not a replacement of the former by the latter' (Paffenroth, 1999, p.3).

This sense of union which balances different modes of being is one of the strengths of monasticism. It also informs the provision of facilities for rest and retreat for those visiting their houses which 'has become a vitally important aspect of the work of most of the Anglican Religious Communities' (Stanton, 2017, p.80).

Many monastic communities attract oblates or associates, called to follow a particular spiritual path. This usually involves a process of gradual entry or a type of noviciate and a commitment to a rule of life. There are two main ways of locating this process geographically. Most monastic houses expect oblates or associates to be attached to their particular monastic community. If the oblates or associates move to another area, their attachment is not transferable to another community. This is an expression of the Benedictine dimension of stability. By contrast, as Franciscan tertiaries are an order in their own right, known as the Third Order, and are grouped into areas, it is easy to transfer to a different area. At the time when I identified a calling to be a Franciscan I was married to an Army officer, which involved moving house every other year, so that it was the Third Order which offered

me stability and contributed to a sense of well-being despite the disruption of frequent moves.

One of the strengths of a rule of life is that it offers an overall structure for everyday life. While particular versions of a rule of life vary, the overall aim of the founders is to live the Gospel in a more authentic and integrated way. From the Rule of St Benedict of the sixth century CE to the twentieth century Rule of Taizé, the founders have been concerned to help followers to come closer to the Gospel. For example, Brother Roger of Taizé writes: 'This rule contains the minimum for a community to grow up in Christ and devote itself to a common service of God' (2012, p.5). As part of their structure for everyday life, those in monastic communities are expected to have time for recreation.

For those not called to enter religious communities fully, the rule of life offers a realistic alternative to be combined with ordinary life. When St Francis encouraged the formation of the Third Order in the thirteenth century CE, he recognised that many are called to serve God in the spirit of poverty, chastity and obedience in everyday life, rather than in a literal acceptance of these principles as in the vows of the brothers and sisters of the First and Second Orders. The rule of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis is intended to enable the duties and conditions of daily living to be carried out in this spirit. The first aim of the Third Order is 'to make our Lord known and loved everywhere' (Society of St Francis, 2010, p.811). The rule is Gospel-based and assumes a rhythm of daily prayer and regular attendance at the Eucharist. Tertiaries may be female or male, lay or ordained, and renew their individual rule of life annually in the presence of others.

The discipline involved in trying to live out a rule of life is intended to support a holistic approach to life and can be experienced as liberating or, as the writer Esther de Waal puts it, 'a lifeline which gives me practical help not only to hold on to my relationship with God, but also my relationship with others and myself' (1995, p.xiii). Those in ministry have a responsibility to attend to their own personal needs in order to be of service to others and thus to God. Creative repair can be most useful when it is practised routinely in everyday life. By practising it in a group which meets regularly, ministers can refresh their relationships with their own creative selves as well as being refreshed by the creative mutuality due to the presence of others in the group.

Creative repair can be integrated into a rule of life. The structure of regular creative repair in a group setting can complement time spent ministering to the needs of others. Further, it is my experience that the stability offered by a rule of life helps the maintenance of habits which sustain a sense of *well-being* and support a *balance* between the contemplative and active life. In addition, I would like to consider the idea of *time wisdom* or the way in which time may be thought about by those in ministry. I shall now comment on these 'sub-concepts' in turn.

Well-being

Working in a therapeutic context, my understanding of health is often highlighted by what can go wrong in physical, mental or psychological aspects of life. Problems are often presented as disturbances in relationships, both with others and within oneself. Often there are deep issues of identity and the meaning of life, as well as bereavement and trauma, whether in childhood, earlier adult life or more recently. This informs my belief that well-being is more than soundness of body as might be defined in a medical context and is to be found 'in every aspect of human life' (Hurding, 2013, p.43). My understanding of well-being goes beyond the balancing of psychological, social and physical resources and challenges implied by psychologists Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012, p.230). As a Christian priest, I value a theological understanding of how we can experience full flourishing. In Paper 1, I embraced the view of Williams that the whole business of theology is to trace how God transforms flesh (Paper 1, Appendix A, pp.152). He writes that God 'has made a world which God purposes to inhabit and which in some sense God does already inhabit in that wisdom, that beauty, that order, that alluring wonder which is there in our environment' (Williams, 2007, pp.10-11).

This study seeks to explore the value for clergy of practising creative repair in a group. The importance of others is, in my view, central to well-being. Well-being is complex and involves 'the incremental building of networks of relationships and human connection, self-esteem, self-belief, purpose, meaning, value and good relationships' (Webster, 2002, p.41).

Relationships are central to our experience as human beings and while the monastic communities are particular expressions of people coming together to live a shared vision of the Christian faith, all practising Christians usually meet with others to worship God and work together to help others. Reference to relationships assumes a corporate aspect to well-being, and ministers are leaders of Christian

communities. Since the days of the early Church there has been a corporate dimension to Christianity. As a group analyst, my work involves moving beyond the needs of the individual, couple or family, to the wider community. My psychotherapy practice acts as a lens through which to see the benefit of a group dimension to creative repair.

Theologically, to be a person has an essential corporate dimension so that to be in a healthy relationship with others is a key aspect of well-being, as suggested in Paper 3 (Appendix C, pp.212-216). There is a useful difference to be made between the notions of 'individual' and 'person'. Both theologically and psychologically the idea of a person has a stronger social implication than the idea of an individual. For Williams, the individual will always be an example of a type, whereas a 'person in Christ, a person becoming holy... their meaning... is in the utterly one-off character of their relation with the person Jesus Christ' (2003, p.102).

Psychologically, the idea of the social unconscious in persons has been developed recently in group analysis by group analysts Hopper and Weinberg (2011) and especially by Omay, who calls the social self the 'nos' or the 'we', which coexists with the 'I', the individual ego (2012). This complements the work within the theory and practice of pastoral care of both O'Connor (1975), who has suggested that the process of becoming is more than an individual journey, and McLure (2010), who has questioned the habitual attitude to individual and social needs as being at odds with one another. For well-being we need relationships. Ministers who practise creative repair with others will have respite from the role of leadership and be less likely to feel that they have to do everything themselves.

Balance

My second sub-concept is that of balance. One of the strengths of monasticism which I have already identified is the balance between a contemplative and an active life. As many monastic communities seek to be self-supporting, members will not only spend regular times in personal and corporate prayer, but will also work either on the land or within other aspects of their productivity. For example, the nuns of the Order of St Clare in Freeland, Oxfordshire, produce, market and distribute wafers and cards worldwide in response to regular orders. They grow vegetables and look after hens. They also have times of study, recreation and designated holidays.

Within an increasingly demanding secular work culture, the importance of a healthy work–life balance is recognised as a way of protecting mental health against the ‘potential detrimental effects of work related stress’ (Mental Health Foundation, 2015). There is a discussion around the nature of ministry work: that it is part of a particular vocation and that it is not so much about who we are or what we do after ordination, but rather a ‘vocational identity’ grounded in our relationship with Christ (Cocksworth and Brown, 2006, pp.5-6). This does not necessarily protect clergy from succumbing to the *zeitgeist* of busyness but does encourage reflective practice about what is being modelled for others. One of the participants in the focus-group discussion described in Paper 2 believed that it is important for clergy to model a better work–life balance when so many parishioners are leading rushed lives (Appendix B, p.181). Collicutt, a clinical psychologist and practical theologian, writing about Christian formation, suggests that there ought to be a balance ‘between contemplation and action; between detachment and engagement, between hard slog and flow’ (2015, p.157). By ‘flow’ she is referring to Csikszentmihalyi’s notion of ‘flow’, his name for ‘the positive aspects of human experience – joy, creativity, the process of total involvement in life’ (1990, p.xi) and is the antithesis of boredom. Collicutt sees flow as ‘closely related to play’, something which we feel ‘when we do something as an end in itself, are deeply absorbed, have fun and find that our competence is increased’ (2015, p.149).

A sense of balance is more than an avoidance of extremes. This study is exploring the role of creative repair in supporting the ongoing ministry of clergy rather than focusing on the problems caused by stress. For those who need strategies to avoid serious stress, there are handbooks which offer this, such as a recent one by Christian psychologist Middleton (2015). In my view clergy have a particular responsibility to be stewards of their energy and resources. This involves trying to model good practice. The training and experience of psychotherapists teach that proper breaks or holidays not only meet the clinician’s need to refresh her emotional and psychological energy but also give patients an opportunity to draw on their own inner resources. Regular breaks act as one check and balance against fatigue or staleness for the therapist and the danger of extended dependence on the therapist by the patient. Although clergy are not therapists, they expend psychological and emotional energy in sensitive pastoral care and this needs to be balanced by intentional and regular time off.

A balanced life is helped by the capacity to move between different modes of being. The multi-faceted nature of ministry assumes that clergy are able to move in and out of different roles which often include leading worship, attending to the pastoral needs of those in their care, and fulfilling a range of administrative tasks. There is also a place for recreation and a balance which includes work, rest and play. Collicutt offers the homely metaphor that a balanced life is able to respond to change in a flexible way and, like a well-balanced supermarket trolley, 'can be steered in the right direction without relentlessly pulling off course down avenues of its own making' (2015, p.142).

The capacity to move between different modes of being indicates a flexible mind-set, which for me, as a group analyst, is informed by the perception of gestalt. In particular, as already noted, the perspective of figure/ground is core to classic gestalt thinking. My interest in the sustainability of ministry is informed by gestalt psychotherapist Taylor's description of a healthy process in which 'the relationship between a strong, clear figure and its ground is constantly shifting and dynamic; when the process functions less well, figures are considered to be weak, stale or lacking energy' (2014, p.42).

The words 'constantly shifting and dynamic' imply strength and flexibility. The theologian Ford distinguishes between a balance between extremes, a way of restraining impulse and excess, and 'a balancing which is dynamic and is always on the point of overbalancing as it moves... a picture of desires which are being shaped by one overwhelming desire... the movement that integrates and balances all the others' (2012, p.27). He writes in the context of discerning vocation or of responding to God's invitation to desire what God desires. This sense of the foundational desire of God also connects with the rule of life as it offers a flexible structure within which to move in and out of different modes, all of which are expressions of serving God in prayer and practice.

The flexibility offered by the gestalt perspective of figure/ground is central to the group-analytic understanding of what happens in groups. The figure (in this case, the individual clergy person) is also part of the ground (their local worshipping community; their denomination; their culture; their social group). All that is expressed in a group 'is the foreground, the figure of a process which in its totality comprises the whole group and on the ground of which meaning becomes defined, interpretation springs to life' (Foulkes, S.H. 1986, pp.131-32). Applied to ministry,

clergy are often bound to be the figure in the foreground when in a public role, but could be resourced when they are able to be part of the ground in their practice of creative repair in a group context.

Time wisdom

My third sub-concept concerns time. One factor which recurred in my earlier research is the notion of busyness. The fact is that many clergy have too much to do and this can be a burden which can seem unmanageable. A sustainable approach to this involves more than a work–life balance or time management. It demands another way of thinking about time.

Time is a complex notion. Human beings exist at a particular time in history, time which is measured chronologically. At the same time, Christians, as followers of Jesus, are called to be in the world yet not of the world (John 17:16). This implies a sense of God's time or *kairos* so there is a paradox that, while being engaged in the minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour ongoing experience of measured time or *chronos*, Christians are invited to view time sacramentally. De Caussade wrote that the 'will of God is manifest in each moment, an immense ocean which the heart only fathoms insofar as it overflows with faith, trust and love' (1981, p.82). This sacramental view of time has to be reconciled with the minister's practical need to manage a huge number of tasks, and it demands more than time-management techniques.

One response to the problem of time pressure and the experience of busyness among clergy has been developed in Cherry's idea of *time wisdom* (2012). He suggests that 'time wise' people are able to embrace both *chronos* and *kairos*. Ministers need to become aware of their 'temporal personality' (2012, p.101), noticing and understanding their subjective experience of time. 'Time wisdom' is developed slowly and is helped by a notion of a 'timescape', by which Cherry intends an analogy with landscape.

Such a 'timescape' will be marked by three qualities: first, for some, it is part of the greater whole of the timescape of the Church. The rhythm of corporate and eucharistic worship, connected with the first day of the week and daily morning and evening prayer, allows for regular engagement with scripture, sacrament and prayer, and brings a calming structure to daily life. This resonates with the monastic life, with its rhythm of the daily offices said several times a day. At least one day a week

for rest, recovery and leisure balances more demanding times and allows for the flexibility when needed to respond to occasional crises.

Second, a sustainable 'timescape' is realistic and takes account of the particular life stage and personal commitments of the clergy person. These may vary over time, perhaps in response to the demands of family life or to an evolving stage in ministry or changing state of physical health. This reference to a particular life stage can be enhanced by reference to the Erikson model of life stages which I considered in Paper 1 (Appendix A, pp.164-165). If clergy are able to adapt to the particular challenges of their own life stage while in public ministry, they are modelling sustainable ministry to those whom they serve.

The third quality of 'timescape' is that of flexibility. Cherry comments that 'when for whatever reason you pull it out of shape, it slowly reverts to a healthy and sustainable form' (2012, p.104). This flexibility of mind regarding time connects in a figurative sense with the idea of figure/ground. Just as the clergy person moves in and out of different modes of being according to the different roles required, so a flexible approach to time allows for an ebb and flow in response to the particular needs of the present moment.

If clergy are able to practise creative repair in a group context, they will increase their sense of well-being by balancing the requirements of ministry with their own need to renew their creative energy. By showing flexibility both in their experience of 'timescape' and their capacity to move in and out of a leadership role, they can sustain their practice of ministry. Although they may not live out a formal rule of life, the monastic model suggests that regular habits of balancing work and leisure, solitude and community, enable the elasticity needed to respond to the variable demands of ministry.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced and developed my three concepts of creative repair, group, and a rule of life. This has included considering what it might mean to practise creative repair in a group. The value of regularity in the practice of creative repair has been indicated and the way in which creative repair might usefully be included in a rule of life. My explanation of what these concepts mean has drawn on two key disciplines which have shaped my life: first, Franciscan spirituality and the

broader monastic concept of a 'rule of life'; second, my experience as a group-analytic psychotherapist working with individuals, couples and groups in a variety of public-sector and private settings. My understanding of ministry in the context of this research has been helped by the sub-concepts of well-being, balance and time wisdom. Having explained the concepts which underpin my research at this stage, later, I shall review them in the light of what I find out.

3 Research Methodology

Introduction

In the previous chapter I introduced and explained my conceptual framework. In this chapter I explain the methodology and methods used in my research. Regarding methodology, I begin by locating the study within practical theology which privileges qualitative research. After discussing the epistemological considerations and qualitative methodology, I explain my choice of a small-scale research project as the approach. After discussing ethical considerations, I introduce and justify the particular methods which I have used in order to gather and analyse my data.

Methodological approach and research design

The conceptual framework embraces the ideas of creative repair, group, and rule of life. As it is drawn from both theological and psychological concepts, the broad discipline in which to locate it is practical theology, which welcomes a cross-disciplinary approach. A research study which seeks to investigate what the impact is on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair in a group is best approached through qualitative rather than quantitative research. A small-scale research project is appropriate for a single researcher with no funding and a limited amount of time in which to collect data (Knight, 2002, p.17). The methods used needed to be fit for the inquiring purpose (2002, p.16).

The context of the study is that of Anglican clergy of incumbent status or other leadership role. In order to discover the impact of creative repair in a group on ministry, participants needed to be clergy who belonged to such groups and therefore selected purposively. Access to such participants was best gained through a central diocesan communication. An invitation was sent to those in a leadership role in one diocese, through a gate-keeper who would not be involved beyond offering me access to those clergy who resourced themselves routinely by engaging in creative activities in a group. By 'creative' I mean a voluntary and recreational involvement in a broad range of creative arts. This was inductive research with participants selected purposively who responded to an invitation to take part. At first I considered a case-study approach, with a combination of a focus group and individual semi-structured interviews but in the event it was not possible to run a focus group (see below, p.36). I therefore conducted semi-structured interviews with

those who had responded. This pragmatic approach was characteristic of small-scale research in which original designs have to be adapted in the face of 'recalcitrant reality' (Knight, 2002, p.48).

Locating the study within practical theology

Practical theology has been described by Miller-McLemore as referring to at least four enterprises: a discipline among scholars; a faith activity among believers; a method or way of understanding or analysing theology in practice; and a curricular area for those training in ministry (Miller-McLemore, 2012, p.5). The four different views are 'connected and interdependent' (p.5). This description recognises that practical theology, an evolving discipline, is multivalent and can be conceived broadly.

The fourfold description allows me to locate my study in a helpfully broad framework. Each of the enterprises matches an aspect of this study. First, in an obvious way, as part of a doctoral programme, the study seeks to contribute to the work of a growing community of scholars whose task is 'to support and sustain' the other three enterprises (Miller-McLemore, 2012, p.5). As my study invites clergy participants to reflect on their ministry and regular practice of creative repair, it can be included in Miller-McLemore's second category of practical theology as a faith activity among believers. As a method for studying theology in practice, my study, focusing as it does on the ministry of Anglican clergy, seeks to understand and analyse 'theology in practice used by religious leaders' (Miller-McLemore, 2012, p.5). This third category embraces both theory (or methodology) and particular methods. Among the particular methods described in Part II of Miller-McLemore's companion to practical theology, those which I have considered or used include the case study and psychological theory (Shipani, 2012, pp.91-101; Butler, 2012, pp.102-11). Fourth, if my findings indicate that clergy benefit from the practice of creative repair in a group, then this study will have curricular implications both for initial ministerial training and continuing ministerial development.

Swinton and Mowat's suggestion that practical theology combines the faithful performance of the Gospel with embodiment in human experience (2006, pp.4-5) is, in my view, too narrow. Their apparent restriction of practical theology to a Christian context has been contested by Pattison who takes a broader perspective. His view is that 'God is to be found in all people and places and can be learned about best

often at the edges of orthodox religious communities and thought systems' (2007, p.18). This affirms my belief that practical theology ought to be conceived broadly.

Practical theology is a discipline which can facilitate theological reflection on ministerial practice and enable practitioners to 'draw belief and action closer together' (Cameron and Duce, 2013, p.xi). Within the Christian context, without wanting to downgrade the importance of other areas of practical theology, my particular interest is in the ministry of clergy. This is both for their sake and because of their importance as role models as leaders of their congregations and of Christian culture.

Practical theologians are encouraged to bring a critical sense to all of their enterprises. Lynch has drawn a distinction between 'espoused theories' used to explain pastoral practice and 'theories in use' which actually guide what is practised (2002, p.20). Swinton and Mowat argue that practical theology 'approaches particular situations with a hermeneutics of suspicion' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, pp.v-vii), open to the discovery that what we do is not necessarily what we say we do. They suggest this is in the context of bringing theology into dialogue with the social sciences. This need for 'critical subjectivity' (Bennett, 2014, p.59) applies not only to our examination of whether we practise what we say we do, but also to our reflection on what we research and our willingness to see ourselves in our particular context and to comment on what that might predispose us to think.

By practising critical reflection on situations, the practical theologian 'seeks to ensure faithful practice and authentic human living in the light of scripture and tradition' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.vi). However, practical theology also seeks to hold scripture and tradition to account in the light of faithful practice and authentic human living (Graham, 2000, p.106). By recognising the influences on us from both within and without we can minimise the risks of universalising the particular or of particularising the universal (Lartey, 2000, p.129). Bennett has highlighted the foundational importance of Boisen's recognition of each person as a 'living human document' (2013, p.38). This includes the researcher. Real-life research can be messy and it is recommended that as practical theologians we record our own practice and think through why we do what we do (Cameron and Duce, 2013, p.151).

Since the 1980s, practical theology joined other professions in valuing the Aristotelian idea of *phronesis* or practical wisdom as an important source of knowledge (Graham, 1996, p.7; Miller-McLemore, 2012, p.2). Practical theologians such as Browning, Ballard and others broadened the understanding of practical theology to embrace congregational studies. A congregation in crisis might re-examine the sacred texts, engaging in a dialogue with changing practices. Moving from practice to theological reflection, and back to practice has opened up new perspectives. Informed by the Christian tradition and other sources of knowledge, this has been described as a “correlational” process of reflection leading to transformation’ (Graham, Walton and Ward, 2005, p.128).

My training and experience as a group analyst and psychodynamic psychotherapist working with groups and individuals have been a major source of internalised knowledge in this study. Both the psychological understanding gained through this discipline and the clinically focused routine of reflective practice, which this work involves, are key sources which I bring to this study. Reflective practice is increasingly part of many disciplines, and part of my work as a group analyst is to facilitate reflective practice with staff teams in the NHS. In the case of one group, my co-facilitator is the hospital chaplain. Although I am employed as a clinician, and draw on psychological theory to frame my work, as a Christian I also see all of my work through a theological lens, albeit one whose theological expression is implicit rather than explicit. As an ordained group analyst, I believe that practical theology is the ideal discipline within which to locate my research, given its interdisciplinary nature (Woodward and Pattison, 2000, p.15).

Epistemological considerations

McLeod has suggested three types of knowledge which become available through qualitative research. These are *knowledge of the other*, *knowledge of phenomena* and *reflexive knowing* (McLeod, 2001, p.3). The first and third of these types of knowledge are relevant to my research. *Knowledge of the other* is a result of the researcher focusing on a particular individual or group and exploring the ways in which they perceive and interact with the world. By exploring the impact on clergy of their practice of creative repair in a group context, as I discover it in them, my study is a contribution to the *knowledge of the other*. It also gives them an opportunity to reflect on the way in which they resource themselves and repair the energy expended in the practice of ministry. This is their *reflexive knowing*, which can be

fed back into the system in two ways. It is possible for me to feed it back, perhaps via continuing ministerial development, or via this thesis. They can also bring it back, both through their encounters with other clergy and perhaps via their annual ministerial development review.

Knowledge of phenomena is not part of this study, as I shall not be exploring the impact of clergy repair on their church communities. However, I shall be contributing to *reflexive knowing*, as I shall be reflecting on my own practice. It is a way of knowing in which the researcher reflects both personally and epistemologically. The intentionally personal aspect of reflexivity in research helps to define it epistemologically as qualitative as distinct from positivist research, in which 'the interests, passions and values of the researcher are put to one side' (McCleod, 2001, p.195). It has also been suggested that this is the most crucial dimension of the qualitative research process (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.59).

There is a sense in which the reflexive researcher co-creates the narrative which is the research encounter. Etherington has described researcher reflexivity as 'the capacity of the researcher to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts... inform the process and outcomes of enquiry' (2004, pp.31-32). In my clinical work I am used to thinking with a person about their personal struggle and noticing what it may stir up in me as a response to the interaction. This involves processes which have technical terms such as transference, counter transference, projection and introjection. While recording a live interview or conducting a focus group, the task is not to analyse the mental state of those involved but to stay in my role as a researcher, responding sensitively to their contribution to the study. Nevertheless some of the skills practised in a therapeutic context are transferable to the research encounter. Sensitivity and awareness of the complex dynamics of the interview process are essential in order not to over-influence the co-creation of the narrative or colonise the encounter (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.61). One of the strengths of my therapeutic approach is the capacity to attend to what is going on in the other, notice what this brings up in me and work out what belongs to whom in the encounter. This helps to allow me to create a safe space in which the other can explore what matters in the moment. In addition, it allows me as a researcher to understand at least some of the differences between my subjects' interpretations and my own. On the other hand, one of the weaknesses of my therapeutic approach might be that I would allow the conversation to stray further than the research requirements of the interview would indicate.

As a reflexive researcher, I have considered my own role as a clergy colleague. In the context of counselling research, Etherington has indicated that our role as a researcher can be enriched when we have explored and processed our personal history in such a way as to enable us to stay in emotional contact with others whose stories may remind us of our own (2004, p.180). This principle can usefully be applied to research in practical theology (Cameron and Duce, 2013, p.xvii). My memory of being a clergy daughter growing up in a busy vicarage, and my own experience since ordination in 2002, as well as my clinical experience of listening to the stories of my clergy patients, have prompted me to explore the need for creative repair for those taking leading roles in ministry. One of my observations when attending clergy chapter meetings was that a culture of 'busyness' seemed to be assumed and I began to think about the importance of challenging that culture. More recently, as I have conducted ministerial development reviews of local clergy, I have been in a position to reflect with the reviewees about their balance of ministry and personal life.

Growing up in a church which assumed that women could not be ordained meant that I was slow to realise the contribution which women could make in leadership roles. While my father was critical of the role of bishops, neither he nor my mother questioned the issue of gender as I was growing up, although my mother trained as a deaconess later on. When the ordination of women became possible in the Anglican Church, my role then as the wife of a serving senior Army officer prohibited that possibility. Since the break-up of my marriage, my training as a group analyst and experience of both group and individual psychotherapy as a patient have allowed me to explore and process my experience as a woman, an unexpected consequence of which was new freedom to explore my priestly vocation. My encounters with clergy have been mixed and I am aware of my desire to make a difference to the sustainability of ministry via the creative arts. When analysing my data I have tried to hold this in mind and be attentive to the responses of my participants in order to learn from them.

To my knowledge, the concept of creative repair has not been explored in the literature about ministry, although there is material about a theology of the arts (Harries, 1993; Nichols, 2007; Illman and Smith, 2013). When giving talks and occasional workshops on creative repair to counsellors and singing teachers I have met no resistance to the idea of replenishing the emotional and psychological energy used routinely in their work. During workshops on creative repair for clergy

and ordinands, they were happy to think about it in the classroom context as a 'one-off', but thought it unlikely that they could introduce it into everyday life afterwards. At best, creative repair would be seen as one possible and occasional way of relaxing on a day off. The idea of regularly joining others in a shared creative pursuit away from clergy colleagues and without a leadership role is a logical development of my original contribution of creative repair to the literature on ministry.

Qualitative methodology

Within practical theology, qualitative methods of research are preferred (Cameron and Duce, 2013, p.14). As the 'theological study of practice' (p.13), practical theology uses qualitative methods in order to see how God is experienced in particular practices through unique encounters with individuals and groups. While qualitative research involves descriptions and conversations transcribed into text, quantitative research relies on statistics to measure and analyse whatever is being studied, searching for general laws. Qualitative research creates idiographic knowledge which assumes that each person's experience is unique and that understanding emerges from the particulars. So, for example, if there are a number of siblings in a family, each one's experience of being parented will be unique to that person, depending on many variables such as gender, position in the family and the assumptions made by parents about their personality.

Qualitative research is inductive, in that it begins with experience and entails reasoning from the particular to the general, rather than deductive, which involves reasoning from the general to the particular (Walliman, 2011, p.5). It assumes the perspective of *constructivism*, also known as *constructionism*, which 'asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors' (Bryman, 2012, p.33). This understanding of knowledge suggests the existence of multiple realities, meaning that the same phenomena can be interpreted in various ways, each of which holds independent validity. The researcher is not involved as a distant observer, but as 'an active participant and co-creator of the interpretive experience' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.35). What is sought is a more flexible, negotiated meaning and a deeper understanding of situations. My methodology is an interpretive paradigm as understood in the social sciences (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.75). 'Interpretivism is a term given to a contrasting epistemology to positivism' (Bryman, 2012, p.28). Positivism is an epistemological position advocating the application of the methods of the natural

sciences to the study of social reality. By contrast, interpretivism requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action using a strategy that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences.

This raises the question for practical theologians of how those who believe in revelation cope with the fact that the subjective meaning of social action is its meaning. My response to this is to point up the importance of human experience in the interpretation of scripture. There is a 'dialectic between the text of the Bible and the text of life' (Bennett, 2013, p.20). God engages in dialogue with human beings and truth comes through dialogue (Leach, 2015, p.42). As the main sources of theology – scripture, tradition and experience – are lived uniquely by each participant in a research project, interpretivism offers a framework for the understanding of that individual meaning and experience.

Qualitative research allows me the opportunity to gain *idiographic* knowledge: meaningful knowledge which can be gained in unique, non-replicable experiences via methods which facilitate 'thick description' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, pp.43-45). Bryman describes this as 'rich accounts of the details of a culture' (2012, p.392). The culture to be explored in my study is that of the practice of creative repair in a group by clergy who have a leadership role.

A small-scale research project

This study falls within the definition of a small-scale, low-budget research project conducted over a relatively short period of time (Denscombe, 2010, p.3). Various strategies may be used. Sampling is one overall strategy subdivided into various particular sampling methods or techniques (pp.23-49). Another strategy is a case study and, in discussion with one of my supervisors, I decided to look into the feasibility of a case study. One of the features of a case study is that it encourages the use of more than one qualitative research method (Denscombe, 2010, p.54). The case-study method did not prove viable, as my plan to combine semi-structured interviews with a focus group did not work out (see below, p.36). Therefore I returned to the exploratory sampling strategy of a small-scale research project (Denscombe, 2010, p.41). Purposive sampling was appropriate in order to select respondents 'on the basis of their known attributes' (p.35). As the context of my study is Anglican clergy of incumbent status or other leadership role, I approached a diocesan bishop who was willing to act as gate-keeper to those on the appropriate

mailing list. Then I interviewed the four respondents who agreed to participate in the research. I then recorded and transcribed the interviews myself.

In order to engage with a wider range of experience, I have reflected on the clergy interviews in the light of my own professional practice as a counsellor, psychotherapist and workshop leader over the last 25 years. Although the content of most of my encounters is confidential, I can extract anonymous examples from informal notes taken after live encounters with people. Although I was not thinking about it in this academic framework at the time, as I reflect on the many encounters, my memory and any notes made offer an alternative perspective and allow me to consider the ways in which my research has answered or failed to answer my original research question.

Ethical considerations

The main ethical principle in research is to 'do no harm' (Simons, 2009, p.96), a principle which is enabled through good relationships or relational ethics. The experience of taking part in research can affect the participant in ways which cannot always be predicted. In order to avoid doing harm, a number of procedures act as checks and balances in this aspect of the research. By gaining the written consent of the participant who had read a copy of the participant information sheet (Appendix D), the researcher ensured that the participant committed intentionally to the research process (Appendix E). This permission could have been withdrawn at any time during the research process. By promising to protect the confidentiality of the information given in the research and the anonymity of the participant, trust could be established between researcher and participant. In the event of any unintended distress being caused by the research process, one of my professional colleagues agreed to be available to offer support. In the event this was not required.

My ethics application was given approval by the Departmental Research Ethics Panel on 20 November 2014.

Methods

My choice of methods has evolved during my research journey. Following on from the use of a focus group of clergy who had already completed a questionnaire on creative repair as reported in Paper 2 (Appendix B), a case-study approach seemed

desirable. The term 'case study' has a number of resonances from a wide range of disciplines (Robson, 2011, p.137). In particular, case studies have a long history in my psychotherapy discipline, as it was the preferred method used by Freud and successive psychoanalysts to illustrate their thinking and develop their theory. They were working with individuals, but group analysts have also illustrated theory by drawing on their experience of conducting groups. In the psychoanalytic or group-analytic framework, the use of a case study usually involves exploring and reflecting on what is being said in a therapeutic context in order to try to understand the conscious, unconscious and here-and-now dimensions of the person or persons involved in the setting.

The purpose of a case study in research may also be exploratory, 'trying to get some feeling as to what is going on in a novel situation' (Robson, 2011, p.141), although the methods used may be different. A case-study research design focuses on the study of single cases or a small number of cases. It is 'based upon the assumption that the case being studied is typical of cases of a certain type' (Kumar, 2014, p.155) and would therefore offer insight into other similar situations. A case study has been defined as 'an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a "real life" context' (Simons, 2009, p.21).

As indicated earlier, a case study benefits from the use of more than one method. Therefore I had hoped to combine semi-structured interviews with individual respondents with a focus group made up of people invited by my respondents. The method of purposive sampling was used in order to select my participants, as they needed to suit the issue which I was investigating (Liamputtong, 2011, pp.50-51). The goal of purposive sampling is 'to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed' (Bryman, 2012, p.418). As I was interested in those clergy who already practise creative repair in a group, purposive sampling was the appropriate method to use in my invitation to participants.

First I sent a letter of invitation to the clergy in one diocese of the Church of England. The bishop acted as gate-keeper, while making it clear that he would not be involved in the research in any other way. Those who responded were sent a participation information sheet and a participation consent form (Appendices D and E). They were then invited to do two things: first, to ask one or two people from their

ministry setting to take part in a recorded focus group about healthy ministry; second, to take part in one-to-one, recorded, semi-structured interviews of about an hour about the impact of their engaging in creative repair in a group on their healthy ministry. In the event, it was not possible to set up the focus group, and the request to do so may have put off some possible participants from taking part in my study.

As I could no longer use more than one method for my study, I gave up the idea of a case study. Returning to the broader framework of a small-scale research study and the approach of sampling in general and purposive sampling in particular, I used semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research usually employs semi-structured interviews as a preferred method over fully structured interviews with predetermined questions in a set order. Semi-structured interviews differ from an interview-based survey questionnaire only in the inclusion of more open-ended questions (Robson, 2011, p.279). In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has a '*guide* that serves as a checklist of topics to be covered and a default wording and order for the questions, but the wording and order are often substantially modified based on the flow of the interview' (Robson, 2011, p.280). By conducting semi-structured interviews with my participants, I hoped to acquire responses which would give some indication of how, if at all, engaging in creative repair in a group contributes to their ministry.

After discussion with one of my supervisors, I wrote again to my respondents, explaining that the focus-group aspect of my proposed research was not possible, and asking them if they were still willing to take part in individual semi-structured interviews. They were all willing to do so. There were four participants and although I would have preferred to have more, they provided a rich variety of context. They were incumbents representing both rural and urban ministry in different areas of the diocese, each practising a varying form of creative repair in a group. There were two men and two women and they were all stipendiary incumbents. One woman sang in a choir; one man played in a band and an orchestra; the second woman belonged to a theatre group; the second man had been a member of a photography group which he had once set up, until two years before the interview.

Each of the recorded semi-structured interviews was conducted in the home of the participant. There were twelve generic questions which my participants had not seen in advance. This was in order to protect the spontaneity of their responses (Appendix F). The first two questions placed them in their ministry context. How long

they had been ordained in the Church of England and what sort of varied ministry experiences had they had so far? Did their particular form of creative repair pre-date their ministry? What impact had their ministry had on their creative repair? Further questions invited them to comment on the impact of their creative repair both on them personally and on their ministry. In each case, what did it mean to them if they were unable to practise it for some reason? I asked about the group aspect of their creative repair, what it meant to be alongside others engaged in the same activity. Other questions invited them to think about what else resources them and what they might understand to be healthy ministry. I asked how they thought about their creative repair theologically. As I was curious to learn about the way in which they were supported in their practice of creative repair, I asked how others reacted to their practice of creative repair: family, friends, parishioners, bishop. A final question gave them the opportunity to offer anything else which had occurred to them during the course of the interview. These open-ended questions were designed to encourage my participants to reflect on the impact of their engagement with the creative arts in a group on themselves as persons and on their ministry. Having completed the interviews, I transcribed them myself in order to come 'close to the data', described by Denscombe as 'a real asset when it comes to using interviews for qualitative data' (2011, p.275).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained my methodological approach and the methods used in the research. The study has been located in the discipline of practical theology which is multivalent and can be broadly conceived. Having introduced the fourfold description highlighted by Miller-McLemore, I have suggested that all of the four enterprises in her description apply to my study. The role of theological reflection in practical theology has been identified and connected with the reflective practice of my work as a clinician.

Epistemologically, I have drawn on McLeod's three types of knowledge which become available through qualitative research. Of these, *knowledge of the other* and *reflexive knowing* are relevant to my study. Taking the idea of reflexive knowing further, I have identified myself as a reflexive researcher as described by Etherington and am mindful of the possible impact of my own circumstances, training and both clinical and ministry practice on my role as a researcher.

Having drawn a distinction between the inductive reasoning of qualitative research and the deductive reasoning of quantitative research, I have indicated that the former is favoured in practical theology. Reasoning from the particular to the general, qualitative research creates idiographic knowledge involving descriptions and conversations. Within qualitative research, I have explained my choice of a small-scale research project as the approach and explained my decision not to use a case-study strategy. After highlighting certain ethical considerations, I have considered the particular methods chosen for this small-scale qualitative research project, explaining my preference for purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews. Finally, I have described the process by which I sought participants and interviewed those who responded and agreed to take part. In the next chapter I describe my method for coding the interviews and the process of identifying important themes in the data.

4 Factual Findings

Introduction

In the first part of this chapter I give a brief introduction to each of my four research participants, describing their ministry setting and choice of creative activity. In each case I add a comment about my experience of the interview. Next I describe the way in which I have analysed the four interviews which I transcribed myself soon after conducting them in the spring of 2015. The reasons for adopting a method of coding known as eclectic coding, using a variety of codes, are explained. Having identified a substantial number of codes for each transcript, and referred back to my research question, I have drawn together twelve categories which I interrogated with six questions, each of which drew out four or five responses. The questions were turned into six groupings of the responses and presented with quotations from the data. By looking through and across the groupings with their respective responses, I have identified five key themes, which I shall interpret in the next chapter.

My participants

The four participants came from each of the four archdeaconries of a large diocese. In order to identify them in this study I have given them the letters A, B, C and D, the letter indicating the chronological order in which I interviewed them in February or March 2015. When using the present tense, I am speaking of the time of the interview. All four were positive about my research and seemed to have enjoyed the experience of the interview.

Participant A

A is male and has been in ministry for 18 years. He was a curate in a modern catholic urban parish. His present post is a rural benefice. He began with three parishes, which then combined with four more, making a total of seven parishes ranging from modern catholic to rural, low-church evangelical. One church in a small hamlet is very 'spiky' (meaning Anglo-Catholic) and has Resolution A in place (which means that the Parochial Church Council will not accept a woman to preside at the Eucharist). He served as an area dean for seven years. He is married with children. He used to be a professional photographer and had been a member of a photography group which he had set up, until two years before the interview.

Participant A seemed settled in his ministry. He was very honest about his experience of burnout as a young photographer. His membership of a monastic order was central to his way of life. His experience as an area dean had been formative and he hoped that my research would encourage others to live a more balanced life.

Participant B

B is female and has been in ministry for about 14 years. She has had two posts since ordination. She was a curate in a large town. Her present post was first priest-in-charge, then vicar in a town church. She is married with children. She and her husband sing in a choir away from her parish. She is due to retire a few months after the interview.

Participant B's approaching retirement seemed to be informing a conscious slowing down of her ministry work. She seemed keen to reflect on her experience, and described a time when she had become quite stressed and felt well supported at that time. She enjoyed her urban ministry and was unsure how she would have managed rural ministry.

Participant C

C is female and has been ordained for nearly 12 years. She was a curate in a small country town with a village church attached. She has been in her present benefice for seven years, first as a house-for-duty priest working part-time, then as incumbent since three years before the interview. It is a rural benefice with seven parishes. Since her husband left her, their children have continued to live with her. She belongs to a theatre group outside of the benefice.

Although Participant C did not go into detail about her husband's departure, it was clear that the breakdown of her marriage had taken its toll and it was her need to adjust to being a single parent as well as a vicar that had prompted her to join her theatre group in order to bring more balance into her life.

Participant D

D is male and has been in ministry for 20 years. He was a curate in another diocese; then, after six months' training, went to Africa for four years, where he was assistant vicar in a cathedral and taught one day a week at a theological college. His present

post is that of a rector in a town. He is married with children. He plays both cornet in a band and trumpet in an orchestra.

For Participant D his experience as a curate when he had no access to a band or an orchestra had informed his resolve always to have access to opportunities to play one of his instruments in future ministry settings.

Coding the interview transcripts

Having transcribed the interviews, I coded them. My codes consisted of either single words or short phrases which caught the essence of the data (Saldaña, 2016, p.4). I focused on the views of my individual participants rather than on a particular issue (Flick, 2014, p.420). I decided not to do line-by-line coding, as not all of the material was directly relevant to my research question and this method can also lead to an overwhelming number of codes (Saldaña, 2016, pp.78-79). Therefore I coded the material which was relevant to my research question and I used a combination of codes which included descriptive codes, process or gerund codes, *in vivo* codes and versus codes. Using more than one type of code helped me to do justice to the potentially rich material relevant to my research question which the four transcripts presented. This combination of codes is described as eclectic coding and is thought to be particularly appropriate for qualitative studies using data forms such as transcripts (Saldaña, 2016, p.213). Using all four codes stimulated my imagination and gave me different ways of looking at my data, which helped me to identify my categories.

Descriptive codes summarize in a word or phrase the basic topic of qualitative data (Saldaña, 2016, p.102). For example, codes such as 'ministry role', 'setting' and 'management' were appropriate for certain topics in the data.

Process codes use gerunds to describe both observable activity and more general conceptual action (Saldaña, 2016, p.111). Examples from my coding include 'being unpopular', 'linking art and ministry' and 'meeting non-churchgoers'.

In vivo codes refer to a word or short phrase from the actual language used by participants in the study. There were not many in my coding, but examples from my transcripts are 'all work and no play' and 'being the person God made you to be'.

Versus codes 'identify in dichotomous or binary terms the individuals, groups, social systems, organizations, phenomena, processes, concepts etc. in direct conflict with each other' (Saldaña, 2016, p.137). Although I had very few of these, there were one or two instances when a versus code seemed appropriate. One was a reference to a pressure on ministry from church structures, and another was clergy dreading Christmas and Easter, by which my participant seemed to imply a contradiction in terms, as the overwhelming nature of the organisation and preparation needed for these major Christian festivals made it hard for clergy to enjoy them.

Eclectic coding, which uses a combination of two or more coding methods, is purposefully chosen 'to serve the needs of the study and its data analysis' (Saldaña, 2016, p.213).

For interview A there were 44 codes, for interview B there were 45 codes, for interview C there were 46 codes and for interview D there were 57 codes. Altogether, there were 163 different codes. Few of these overlapped exactly. Of these, four codes occurred in all four transcripts, three codes occurred in three transcripts and twelve codes occurred twice. The other 144 codes occurred once.

From coding to categories

In order to reduce this substantial number of codes to something more manageable, I employed one of Saldaña's 'analytic transitions' or the construction of categories from the classification of codes (2016, p.212). Having cut out all the codes, I laid them out in parallel columns for participants A, B, C and D, applying Saldaña's 'tabletop categories' exercise (2016, pp.230-31). This involved a physical process of moving across the columns, grouping the codes into appropriate categories. This process of handling the data and moving it about helped the identification of categories.

Both Bryman and Saldaña assert that coding is to be kept in perspective, as it is 'a mechanism for thinking about the meaning of your data' (Bryman, 2012, p.577), emphasising that it is up to the researcher 'to exercise good thinking in your continued exploration of and reflection on your data' (Saldaña, 2016, p.212). Keeping in mind my research question and the purpose of my study (Saldaña, 2016, p.70), I identified 12 categories, giving them each an identifying letter or letters, and noted which codes comprised the categories (Appendix G). As the research

question asks what the impact on the ministry of clergy is of engaging in *creative repair* activities in a group, my categories reflected the various implications of the question. The codes included those referring to the following: ministry roles; ministry setting; a sense of vocation and/or way of life; relationships; personal growth; the role of the participants' particular creative activity in their lives; the importance of their creative activity as part of their health and well-being; theological and spiritual understanding; the group; the importance of regularity and boundaries.

The categories with the labelled letters thus gathered were:

1. Role in ministry and view of it [R]
2. Ministry setting and its demands [M]
3. Vocation and way of life [V]
4. Relationships within ministry setting [Rps/M]
5. Relationships with others including family [Rps/O]
6. Personal growth and self-understanding [P/S]
7. Particular creative activity and its importance to the participants [C/I]
8. Attachment to group [A/G]
9. Health and well-being [H/W]
10. Theological underpinning [T]
11. Creativity/spirituality [C/S]
12. Role of regularity and boundaries to protect time off [Rg/B]

Having identified these categories, I was then in a position to interrogate them in order to assist the identification of key themes.

From categories to themes

The following questions were then used in order to interrogate the categories which had been formed from the codes. First, what are the drivers to creative repair? For example, from the perspective of the participants, what are they dealing with that their creative activity might address, both in a ministry context and personally? Second, what blocks the practice of creative repair? Third, what are the perceived benefits of creative repair? Fourth, what is the impact of creative repair? Fifth, what supports creative repair? Finally, what is the role of the group in creative repair?

In response to each of these questions, there were four or five responses. I shall now take each of the questions in turn and set out each of the relevant responses, giving examples of what the participants said. When quoting from the transcripts, I have omitted words of hesitation such as 'um', 'er', 'sort of' or 'you know'. Direct quotations from the transcripts are in italics with single quotation marks. Quotations within the participants' quotations are in double inverted commas. After presenting the responses to each question, with their examples from the transcripts, I shall name what seem to me to be the main themes emerging from the whole of the data thus presented.

Question 1: What are the drivers for creative repair?

The first question concerned the drivers for creative repair and the answers were drawn from Categories 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. There were five things that drove people to creative repair, They were the challenge of the participants' particular ministry settings; the need to bear the negative feelings of others; the perceived demands of the role; particular challenges at certain beginnings during ministry; and the challenge of their length of time in a post.

Three participants were explicit about the challenge of their particular settings. Participants A and C were in rural benefices and spoke of the need to manage several different parishes with varying traditions. A referred to it as '*spinning plates*' and C called it '*juggling*'. As rural incumbents, they had to manage the need to take certain parishes through difficult change and C mentioned that there were '*too small a number of people willing to do things*' and the '*difficulty finding officers*'.

A spoke of:

'the challenge of getting a group of villages and parishes to work together, getting them to understand that they are part of a ... collective group and what the benefits are of that, rather than... individual parishes fighting their corner.'

There were three when he started and he inherited a plan to increase the group to seven and had the challenge of '*reducing things down from seven individual PCCs¹ to four.*'

¹ Parochial Church Councils

He also had the challenge that the churches:

‘span the traditions of the Church of England, so that they go from Modern Catholic to what I would call rural Low-Church Evangelical. We do have one church... small hamlet of 50 people which is very spiky, has Resolution A² in place.’

B and D were urban incumbents and had to manage different roles which included civic ones. D described it as having to *‘be all things to all people in some sense, and make everybody feel that their particular issue... is important and you’re giving it your full attention’*. B referred to the occasional district council reception which clashed with her choir rehearsal.

Three of the four participants spoke of the need to bear the negative feelings of others as one of the challenges in their ministry. Participant A had to evict a sitting tenant as well as sometimes experiencing the *‘need to push churches forward and that makes you unpopular’*, and he added wryly: *‘The wonderful thing about multi-parish benefice ministry is that, providing that no more than 50 per cent of them will hate you at the same time, you’re OK.’*

The need to bear the negative feelings of others was echoed by Participants B and C, who each spoke of the difficulty of managing conflict between parishioners and, as B put it, *‘having to come up with either a consensus or a decision, knowing that it’s not going to be accepted by one person or one group.’* C referred to a difficult pastoral situation when the two sides of a family would not talk to one another about funeral arrangements. In the end one side of the family attended the church service and the other attended a long committal at the crematorium.

Three of the participants were explicit about the perceived demands of the role. Participant C felt the need to remain almost anonymous when she joined her theatre group, in order to enjoy the freedom to try different acting roles. This worked for some time but then she was *‘outed’* as a vicar, as a result of the chance attendance at a funeral that she was conducting by another member of the theatre group.

² Resolution A is ‘That this Parochial Church Council would not accept a woman as the minister who presides at or celebrates the Holy Communion or pronounces the Absolution’ (Church Society Trust, 2010, p.3).

Fortunately, by then she had been a member for some time and felt accepted as herself, rather than as a local vicar. In her group the members shared the jobs ‘*so there no stage hands... There are no set builders. We do all the work.*’ The inclusivity of her theatre group which welcomed people with disabilities was in contrast to her experience of church members who are ‘*inclusive on paper, but find it less easy in reality*’.

Both B and D mentioned occasions when their opinion as a musician seemed to carry more weight among other musicians, due to their ministry leadership roles, than they thought appropriate to their musical knowledge. For B it was within her choir that she was deferred to as an ordained person when they went to sing in a cathedral when:

‘they tended to look to me... knowing I was ordained... for extra information about the service... although, you know the choir director... being a church organist, he’s completely au fait with procedures.’

For D it happened when discussing the music in his church, for ‘*the danger is that if I make musical comments, they can be perceived by the choir director or members of the choir as coming from me in my role as rector*’.

Three of the participants referred to the impact of significant beginnings, whether entering ministry training, beginning ordained ministry or the start of their current posts as incumbents. In each case they either set aside their creative activity or did not have the opportunity to practise it. Their experience of missing it was a driver to their future practice of creative repair. Before engaging in ministry training, A was a professional photographer. His new way of life meant leaving this behind, and at first he gave up photography altogether, but later realised that he had given up a core part of himself, so took it up again as recreation. D spoke about his curacy and the frustration of not having the opportunity to play his trumpet or cornet with other musicians. As a result of this experience as a curate, he made sure that he had the opportunity to play regularly with others in later ministry roles. B assumed that she could not return to her choir when she began the post she was in at the time of the interview. The choir rehearsed on a Friday evening, which was not her day off and she assumed that it would clash with church meetings. Only later did she realise that church meetings were rarely held on Friday evenings, so that she could easily re-join her choir.

Participant A also referred to his experience as an area dean when other clergy at the beginning of ministry found it hard to realise that things take time to come to fruition: *'They come in thinking that they will change the world and it doesn't quite work like that. You're governed by the pace of the Holy Spirit.'*

The fifth issue of the participants' length of time in a post was only made explicit by Participant A, who referred to the challenge of *'when you've been in a parish as long as I have... keeping it fresh and keeping interested'*. Although D did not say explicitly that he needed to keep his ministry fresh, he did imply it by mentioning the impact on the quality of his sermons of a two-year Master's course in biblical studies. He said that *'doing my Master's course provided me with intellectual stimulus, but it also, according to what people told me, and have told me since, has improved my preaching'*. B spoke of slowing down as she approached her retirement: *'I think I am probably working less because I get tired more quickly and my retirement date is in sight.'*

Question 2: What are the blocks to creative repair?

The second question concerned the blocks to creative repair and the answers were drawn from Categories 3 and 7. There were four identifiable blocks to creative repair. Three were more pragmatic, such as busyness, potential diary clashes and childcare responsibilities. The fourth was the participants' perceived sense of their vocation.

All four participants referred to the busy demands of ministry, whether it was the need to manage too many rural parishes, each wanting to keep its particular identity, or whether they had too many roles to fulfil in an urban parish, with civic as well as ministry responsibilities. There was a sense that there is no end to ministry.

Participant B described one of the stresses of ministry as *'the amount of work and the fact that it is never finished'*. In addition C spoke of the particular demands of Christmas and Easter because they were *'so overwhelming'*.

The busyness also expressed itself in potential diary clashes which could be a block to creative repair. This was made explicit by two of the participants and implied by the other two. Participant B's assumption was that she could not return to her choir when she began the post she was in at the time of the interview. The choir rehearsed on a Friday evening, which was not her day off and she assumed that it would clash with church meetings. This was a potential diary clash. By contrast, D

knew from experience that church meetings could prevent his availability for orchestral rehearsals or band practices and made sure that these weekly sessions were in his diary before he began his current ministry role. Participant A hinted at clashes for other clergy between ministry and time off when speaking of the importance of protecting his time off: *'clergy feel guilty if they take time off.'* His rule of life obliged him to make sure that he put days off in his diary.

Childcare responsibilities affected the capacity of B and C to practise creative repair. Although all four participants had children, the two women were or had previously been the primary carers and were then much less free to practise their particular creative activity, whereas although the men shared childcare with their wives, this did not prohibit them from practising their particular form of creative repair. In the context of valuing the way of life of ministry, Participant A mentioned: *'I get to spend a lot more time with my children and family than many of my parishioners do.'*

Two participants indicated that there could be a conflict between the wish to be creative and the perceived demands of their vocation. Participant A gave quite an extreme example when he spoke of having been a professional photographer and then *'wound up'* his business and *'I literally put all of my cameras away and I got rid of the negatives... almost a ritual burning of lots of my stuff... because for me... that was... an old way of life.'*

Participant B gave up her choir *'once I was ordained, because I couldn't commit to a regular, weekly activity, an evening to practise, then concerts'*. Later, after coming into her present post, she began to question that decision, so joined the choir again, *'because I realised that I was missing it and it was actually doing me good to be part of it'*.

Question 3: What are the perceived benefits of creative repair?

The third question concerned the perceived benefits of creative repair and the answers were drawn from Categories 6, 7 and 10. Four perceived benefits of creative repair were indicated through the self-knowledge of the participants and their capacity to reflect on their experience; their wish to be like Jesus and their belief in God-given creativity; the impact on ministry of creative repair; and the participants' advice to others entering training or also in ministry.

All four participants demonstrated their self-knowledge and their capacity to reflect on their experience. By drawing a distinction between individual and group creative repair, Participant D indicated the importance of creative repair *per se* as well as the additional value of being creative with others.

'I think it's important doing music with others... I can entertain myself just sitting down at the piano... and that's good and that's beneficial but I think doing music with others... takes you out of yourself; there's an area of great creativity in that you're creating something with other people.'

B referred to meeting with a group of people *'who are very different from the congregation here... so this is not a work relationship... this is friendship'*. It was also time to be with her husband, who belonged to the same choir, in a social context, as the choir would have social time together after the practices. For C her theatre group was particularly important for her social life, as she had joined the theatre group after her husband had left her.

'I find people who like going to the theatre and we have trips to the theatre and that's really nice... as a single parent... it's created a bigger social world for me... so that has really been beneficial.'

A's involvement with his local photography group ended when he realised that he was often in a leading or teaching role. In order to maintain his contact with others, he renewed his connection with a national organisation, so that he could meet other photographers and discuss the artistic aspects of their work.

Each of the participants had reflected on earlier times in their ministry and noticed the impact of the absence of their particular creative activity. This informed their decision to ensure that they practised creative repair in future, as an essential part of their self-care. All four had learnt from experience that they needed to enjoy their creativity alongside others and had previously discovered that they became *'somehow thwarted'*, as C put it, if they were unable to do so.

All four participants indicated that *'being like Jesus'* in terms of a balance between active and contemplative ministry and between being with the crowds and being with a few friends or alone in prayer was sustaining. As Participant A put it: *'just like Jesus, there are times when you just have to turn your back on the crowd and walk*

away and go and be refreshed, because you will be no good to anybody.’ B said: ‘Jesus modelled it in taking time away: “Come away and rest awhile”; he had fun, hospitality, enjoyed a party, wasn’t kind of rule-bound like the Pharisees.’

In addition, Participant A implied an incarnational role of modelling the death and resurrection of Jesus. This was in the context of the challenges of ministry and the need to help a church go through the process of dying, when he said:

‘I think we get afraid of this idea of a church seeming to die and actually we shouldn’t be. Sometimes churches need to go through that process, they need to die, and three times here... that needed to happen. The Holy Spirit would do what was needed. What we had to do, I describe it a bit like a surfer. I had to be ready to ride on the wave when the Spirit moves and that’s a reassuring thing which I share with other clergy, going through that, saying, “You know we are about death and resurrection, actually that’s what we’re all about.”’

It was implicit in all the interviews that the creative gifts of the participants were an essential part of who they were and C was explicit:

‘I come back to the phrase in John’s Gospel where Jesus says: “I’ve come that you might have life and life in its abundance” and I think that God has given you gifts and it is your responsibility to use them... you can’t use them all in ministry.’

For her it was also about replenishing her ‘well’ or her resources. If you were denying things that were significant to you, you were not doing what you were made for and being the person God made you to be. The group aspect was taken for granted in her case, as she needed to be in a theatre group in order to use her creative gifts. The inclusivity of her theatre group was in contrast to her experience of church members who are *‘inclusive on paper, but find it less easy in reality’*.

Participant A implied the God-given nature of creativity when he said that:

‘photography is for me very much a spiritual exercise, really, and I think that any person that’s engaged in any form of art or creativity will acknowledge that side of it and... within the sort of pictures that you take and the themes

that you pick up you're often expressing things that are going on in your life that you might be conscious of and subconscious of'.

He went on to describe quite fully the way in which his photographs at different times of his life reflected his spiritual journey from the process of exploring his vocation onwards and he added: *'I think creativity... comes in waves...a bit like the spiritual life, the tide can be in and the tide can be out.'* By this he meant that his photographs would be *'all rubbish'* although *'technically... fine'* at a time when *'you're having a bit of a desert'*. His experience was that he would work through these times and not take any photographs and then:

'when I find that I'm... not in a ... dark place, but... walking a bit of the narrow road and you're not quite sure of what the journey is ahead, I then do normally start to turn back to photography and take pictures and I think maybe partly through that working out helps me with that journey'.

All four participants spoke of the impact of their creative repair on their ministry. Participant B said that singing regularly in her choir helped her need to sing the Sunday services. Also, her knowledge of church music helped in the choice of music for regular services and she added:

'it helps with funerals actually knowing quite a bit about hymns and music generally... people want a style of music to come in and go out to, so I can help with that and liaison with the crematorium, choosing things off the Wesley system.'

Participant A saw his membership of the photography group as

'showing that clergy do other things apart from sing hymns, read the Bible and take funerals, so it was very positive in that sense, but also it did lead to pastoral encounters even if you're not wearing a dog collar and people ... would ask me to pray for them; I got asked to visit, take funerals of particular people'.

He added that what he called *'relational mission ministry'* worked quite well and that *'as a result we did have a few people that ended up coming to church, though that wasn't my goal'.*

Participant C spoke of the impact on her ministry of resourcing herself: *'If I do keep my well topped up... I'm more efficient, I'm more effective, I'm more open.'*

Participant D spoke of the value of being able to liaise with the brass band for the annual Remembrance Sunday service. He had also used his contacts in the orchestra to source musicians for a church choir concert.

As incumbents, all the participants had various opportunities to train or influence others and sometimes cited the advice they gave to them, as did D, who would say to a new ordinand:

'you absolutely must have an outside interest, outside the Church and that ... can't just be your family because your family is demanding... more than just having friends.'

He added that whether it was sport or music or something else, it offered another perspective, helped you *'to stay in the real world'*, hear what people think and what their lives were like. Above all, it gave you *'some refreshment and recuperation time'*.

Participant A referred to his time as an area dean when *'I dealt with two clergy that were off sick with stress and overwork, whereas those... simple things I think... just help maintain that... healthy balance'*.

Question 4: What is the impact of creative repair?

The fourth question concerned the impact of creative repair on the participants and the answers were partly drawn from Category 9. There were four responses: creative repair had a positive effect on the participants' health and well-being; they valued being in a non-verbal mode; it helped them to grow in confidence; and it supported their flexibility in their leadership role.

All four participants referred to the health and well-being benefits of their creative activity and even the perceived protection of their sanity. Participant C believed in the importance of *'filling your well so that you can be poured out for others'*.

A stated clearly that *'first and foremost it keeps me sane'*. He added that when he has spent days off going away and taking photographs, *'my wife always says, when*

I come back after doing something like that, I'm a much better person.' Later in the interview he added that she *'sees that if I don't have those outlets and channels, I become a grumpy old sod'*.

B referred to her singing in the choir as giving her *'a sense of well-being'*. She also described the experience of going with her husband to her choir rehearsal, which was followed by social time, made it *'a complete break'*. Although she could be tired the next day, she was *'tired in a different way'*.

C spoke of the role of her theatre group in helping her after her husband had left: *'I think, given the difficulties that I've been through personally, it has really helped me to recover.'*

D said that *'it's an opportunity to get away from my other environments and be with other musicians and enjoy making music, so it's something different, it's a change of activity and I think in some way it's refreshing'*.

A was very positive about his days off:

'I get quite excited about my day off because I would have planned where I'm going to photograph and if the weather's not good I might actually be in here printing stuff out or I'll go to an exhibition... so it gives me a sense of purpose on a day off to get me away from ministry.'

One surprising aspect of A's weekly commitment to photography was his comment that it dealt with the possible *'guilt'* aspect in a positive way: *'having a rule of life, being a tertiary... deals with the guilt, 'cos clergy feel guilty if they take time off or do something like that'*. He would feel guilty if he did *not* keep his day off in a creative way.

Three of the participants referred directly or indirectly to the value of being in a non-verbal mode, whether via their creative repair group or another form of recreation.

Participant D spoke of the value of playing his trumpet even when there was no orchestra as:

'music itself is very therapeutic and... if you're playing it then it's creative, you're doing something with it and it doesn't require you to think verbally, it requires you to think in other ways, but it's a different channel of brain activity, as it were.'

B referred to the physical aspect of her voice not getting 'scratchy' and when recovering from a period of serious stress with the help of *t'ai chi*, spoke of the value of 'getting out of your head'. She added: *'It's about working with your body and putting aside all the things that are going on in your mind.'* At a later point in the interview she spoke of walking in London on her day off:

'That's another of my hobbies and actually, I always think I do my best work on my day off paradoxically. I'm right away from the parish and as I walk... I'm reflecting on things... I'm... alert to all the signs around and if there's deeper meaning in them... that provides such rich stuff for sermons or reflections as well as doing me good.'

C spoke of the experience of taken up riding again after her husband left, as she used to ride a lot as a child: *'I know it might sound bizarre to people who don't ride, but I feel absolutely at peace when I'm on a horse... You have to concentrate a lot, obviously, but I feel free.'*

Two participants referred to the role which their creative activity groups played in their growth in confidence. When B was talking about the importance of her choir, even though the performances sometimes clashed with her ministry obligations, she named one of the performances in which she was free to take part as a setting in which her confidence grew. She found that she could:

sing out with confidence and that just made such a big difference to me, something to do with being in a different position... on this occasion I was right in the middle of the front row, so very prominent and I thought... I've really got to go for this... and it gave me a huge boost to realise I could sing out with confidence and feeling.'

At another point in the interview, she said that her voice became 'scratchy' during the choir breaks when she did not sing regularly. This not only highlighted the physical outcome of her regular opportunity to sing in her choir but also indicated the

importance of regular singing in that setting for her role in leading public worship, particularly in the Eucharist, when it was her turn to '*sing the sursum corda*'.

C said that joining her theatre group had given her greater confidence after her husband had left. Later, when referring to the protection of her rehearsal evenings, she commented: '*it's partly about saying, "Actually I'm important enough to resource that."*'

Three of the participants indicated an implicit flexibility in their leadership role. Both B and D mentioned times when they simply joined the church choir as a musician, when possible. They valued the opportunity to be part of the service as a member of the choir, when not leading the worship. This implied that they could have respite from being the one holding the worship together. This flexibility was an outcome of their practice of creative repair.

This flexibility was also demonstrated by D in his understanding of the need to be sensitive to the needs of the music when the instruction *piano* appeared in the orchestral score.

'It's all relative to what's gone before, what's afterwards and to what everybody else is doing. So you could have a... little section... within the orchestral part where the trumpet's supposed to play something that's marked piano, but it could actually be a solo and it could be important that it comes out and is heard.'

On the other hand, '*there could be other bits where you have to... just keep part of the general sound, you need to make sure you're not... distinctly heard, so it's working with others.*'

The main reason why A left the informal photography group which he had helped to set up was that he found himself routinely in a leading and teaching role, due to his past experience as a professional photographer. He explained: '*The thing was that I was in teaching mode all the time... I wanted to move to learning something myself.*' As a result of this decision, he renewed his membership to a professional society, which gave him access to an area group '*partly because I want to receive rather than give*'.

Question 5: Who or what supports creative repair?

The fifth question concerned who or what supports creative repair and the answers were drawn from Categories 5, 11 and 12. The four responses comprised the encouragement of others; the participants' belief that their creativity is an expression of their spirituality; the weekly rhythm of their creative repair; and the participants' protection of their time off and maintenance of boundaries.

All four participants valued the encouragement of other people. Participants A and D were clearly supported by their wives in their respective creative activities. D said that his wife *'does think it's important that I have time to do my music and be refreshed by it'*.

B's husband sang in the same choir, so that the Friday rehearsals followed by social time with choir members was also a precious weekly time for their shared interest and company, making it *'a complete break'*. For C the theatre group was an essential part of her social life after having become a single parent. Also, her children were supportive and came along to performances.

Three of the four participants named others in particular roles who had been central to their practice of creative repair. Participants A and B mentioned church wardens, A also referred to his spiritual director and C her work consultant. A specified the role of the bishop and the church wardens in protecting him, as he was relatively young when appointed to his rural incumbency: *'he ... told the church wardens, "Look after him"... and they have always been very good gate-keepers.'*

Participant B said that everyone was *'very supportive of leisure time'* mentioning the bishop who used to advise clergy to *'put your holidays in the diary first'*. She also referred to a time of acute stress, when one of her church wardens suggested that she try *t'ai chi*. Although this was not a specific comment about creative repair, it showed that the church warden was appropriately concerned for her vicar's health.

Participant C was specifically advised by her work consultant to find a local theatre group to join in order to resource herself after her husband had left her. As she quoted him, he was quite directive:

“You’ve got to have something where you’re not in role... there must be something that you enjoy that is outside the parish and will just give you a dimension to be yourself” and I said: “Well, I really like drama.” “Well, there must be millions of amateur dramatic groups... Go and find one.”

As a consequence of this advice, she joined a local theatre group.

Three of the participants made explicit comments about the spirituality of their creative activity. Participant D saw his playing as part of his way of life as a Christian. He would pray before a concert, seeing all of life as an act of worship.

‘I very much see the music as being something which aids worship, which enables one to connect with God spiritually and also refreshes you emotionally and mentally and in other ways.’

This belief in the spiritual role of music and the absence of a binary approach which might have separated his ministry and love of music was an additional factor in helping D to keep engaging in music. B also referred to the *‘spiritual side’* of singing in her choir as: *‘the whole Christian thing is about life... in all its fullness’*, an explicit connection between her singing and her understanding of Christian spirituality.

A also saw his photography as having spiritual meaning. He wanted to ask: *‘Why did I take that picture?’* and get behind the thinking of other photographers. Rather than discussing the technical side of photography, he talked with them at *‘quite a spiritual level’*, and they might not be *‘religious people’*. He gave an example of looking at a friend’s series of pictures about light and being able to have a conversation at a deeper level with her about the difference it would have made if she had taken the picture from another angle. *‘I think we discover something about ourselves, our human nature and sharing in that and that’s what makes photography like art, very individual and very creative.’*

The weekly rhythm of creative repair was referred to in all four interviews. A was insistent that his day off for photography was built into his Franciscan rule of life. Both B and C wanted to go to their weekly rehearsals in order to be part of their groups even when they could not take part in the performances. D made sure that he put his orchestral rehearsals or band practices into his diary before being fully

installed in his current post, so that those evenings could be protected from a later need to arrange church meetings.

All four participants had learnt about the importance of protecting their time off. Participant C was emphatic, saying: *'My Thursday evenings are sacred and I've just said I'm not available for meetings and I think it's something about being able to have a personal boundary.'*

A was also clear about the importance of his time off: *'I've... always been very strict about making sure I get days off and maintaining my quiet days... if you have a rule of life you have to do it... so it works in that way.'*

Question 6: What is the role of the group in creative repair?

The sixth question concerned the role of the group in creative repair and the four answers were drawn from Category 8. The participants indicated their attachment to their particular creative activity group; a sense of belonging outside of the parish setting; the group as an agent of continuity; and the opportunity to move between different roles within their creativity group.

Each participant showed a degree of attachment to their creative activity group. B had been a member of her choir before her current post and had experienced times when she had to suspend her membership of it, partly due to family responsibilities. When she was able to re-join it five years before the interview, she felt welcomed back and said: *'it was just like slotting back in my place with these people I'd known for years.'* Although she was not able to take part in all the choir's performances while she was an incumbent, the choir featured in her anticipation of life after retirement, when she would be able to be fully involved. C had joined her theatre group at the suggestion of her work consultant, following her husband's departure, and it became a central part of her social life. D seemed less attached to a particular musical ensemble, but made sure after his experience as a curate that he was always part of one musical group or another. A was attached to the photography group which he had helped to found, but decided to leave it when he tired of always being a resource for others, due to his background as a professional photographer. He subsequently re-attached to his professional organisation and took part in meetings and exhibitions.

For all my participants, there was a sense of belonging to a group outside of the parish setting. It was important to meet people who shared their particular creative interest and who were not part of their regular church groups. In A's case his interest in his Lotus 7 sports car enabled him to meet with other enthusiasts once a month and talk carburettors. Both A and D referred to the need to meet '*real people*' as a contrast to those in their church settings whom they served in various roles. B valued the regular time with her husband and other choir members outside of the parish. C was so keen to have a break from her role as vicar that when she joined the theatre group, she did not tell them about it. By the time they knew, she had already established herself as a member of the theatre group and the new information about her role seemed less important.

For three of the participants, the group was an agent of continuity. Participant B had belonged to her choir for many years. She implied that during the time when she felt that it clashed with her ministry role and suspended her membership, her husband continued to belong. There was a strong sense of continuity in her description of her intermittent capacity to belong to it:

'I used to sing early on... the choir started in 1977. I joined some while after my husband but then childcare became difficult, babysitters and things, but when I joined again, five years ago, it was just like slotting back in my place with these people I'd known for years.'

D was explicit about the difficulty of making his creative activity a priority when there were no rehearsals and he wanted to play the piano or study at home.

'With studying, it has to compete with other things I have to do, repairing things that got broken in the home or washing up... so the benefit of playing in an orchestra or band is that you have a dedicated time when you're committed to being there for other people.'

Although A decided to leave the photography group, which he had helped to set up, he was concerned that it would continue to meet. As it had been set up without formal structures, there was no rule about the length of time people would fill certain roles. He said:

'I said I was going to... stop and hand it over and I think partly, in order for it to be handed over properly, I... stopped going because I thought, if I was still there the handover wouldn't happen.'

Later in the interview, he mentioned that the person who had taken over was 'a very committed Methodist' and that he and another person, an atheist, had 'refreshed it and it's still running well and it's still very popular'. He added that: 'I do occasionally pop along to the club and they've asked me to come and give a talk about some aspect of photography and I'm happy to do that.' This confirmed a sense of continuity both for the club and his connection with it. Meanwhile he renewed his membership of his professional society and started attending their exhibitions and local group meetings, thus giving himself an alternative sense of continuity with the group which featured in his life before ordination.

Belonging to their groups gave all of my participants the opportunity to practise flexibility in their various roles. Examples were A's realisation that he needed to be fed and not be in a teaching role in his photography group and his willingness to return as an occasional speaker after he had left it; B preferring to be in a back row, but rising to the challenge when called further forward for a performance and C's theatre group involving all members in being stage hands as well as actors. D was particularly eloquent on his experience of different sizes of ensemble, whether he was playing in an orchestra, a band or occasionally in what he thought of as more of a chamber group.

The themes

A theme is an 'outcome of coding, categorization or analytic reflection' (Saldaña, 2016, p.15) and a set of themes is 'a good thing to emerge from analysis' (p.16). Attending to the significance of the coded material for the lives of the people I am studying (Bryman, 2012, p.577), I kept the research question in mind as I looked through and across the 25-responses to the six questions I asked of the data. This enabled me to identify five key themes:

1. The impact on the participants of their role and sense of vocation.
2. The importance of creativity.
3. The importance of rhythm and self-discipline.
4. The participants' flexibility in a leadership role.

5. The participants' attachment to their creative activity groups.

Reflecting on the overall importance of the factual findings for the research question, I shall interpret these themes in the next chapter.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have given a brief introduction to each of my four research participants, describing their ministry setting and choice of creative activity. Having described the way in which I have analysed the four interviews, I have explained the reasons for adopting a method of coding known as eclectic coding, using a variety of codes. After identifying a substantial number of codes for each transcript, and referring back to my research question, I have presented 12 categories which had been formed from the codes. These were interrogated by six questions which have been presented with their respective relevant responses, illustrated with quotations from the data. Five key themes have been identified, which I wish to open up in the next chapter. Taken together, these findings offer the possibility of a rich and multi-faceted discussion of how creative repair in a group functions in the ministry of clergy.

5 Discussion and interpretation of themes

Introduction

In the last chapter I identified five key themes emerging from the data:

1. The impact on the participants of their role and sense of vocation.
2. The importance of creativity.
3. The importance of rhythm and self-discipline.
4. The participants' flexibility in a leadership role.
5. The participants' attachment to their creative activity groups.

I shall now interpret each one in the light of the literature I reviewed earlier, my practice and any further literature. Before doing so, I give a brief description of relevant aspects of my practice, as it informs a substantial part of my interpretation of the themes.

My practice

My work crosses over my two main current professional identities of group-analytic psychotherapist and self-supporting Anglican priest. Several of my patients have been clergy or their spouses, from various Christian denominations. In addition, since ordination, I have seen people for pastoral supervision and spiritual direction. My work includes various one-off training days as part of the annual 'Hard Skills' course for curates and a range of sessions on creative repair for ordinands, for those taking part in continuing ministerial education, for counsellors and for the British Voice Association. For the last five years I have conducted Annual Ministry Reviews for clergy in my diocese. As a group analyst I conduct experiential or sensitivity groups in a variety of educational and NHS settings. This includes regular employment as a consultant for staff groups within the NHS and occasional sessions with clergy or monastic groups.

While the need to protect the confidentiality of those whom I see is unnegotiable, I am free to reflect on all aspects of my practice in a way which focuses on issues rather than the people presenting them. Within the classical psychoanalytical tradition, theory is advanced via case studies, or examples from clinical practice. This way of presenting theory dates back to the pioneering work of Freud (Pick,

2015, p.1; Ross, 2016, p.42). As I work within this broad tradition, when interpreting my themes, I shall at times also give examples from my practice to support my argument, as well as from my personal experience where appropriate.

Theme 1: The impact on the participants of their role and sense of vocation

The initial invitation to clergy to take part in my research was sent out to those in a leadership role in one diocese. Therefore it was not surprising that my participants were all incumbents. This meant that they had been instituted either as vicar or rector within their respective benefices. One of the most important drivers for their practice of creative repair in a group was the need to have respite from their role as incumbent. Whether this was the perceived need to '*be all things to all people*' as Participant D put it or Participant C's need to be anonymous in her theatre group, so that she was free to explore other aspects of herself there, the weight of the role seemed hard to bear at times. As incumbents, whether or not they were assisted by colleagues, they would have ultimate responsibility for their incumbency. Before offering an interpretation of this, I give some clinical background to my thinking.

When working with people in my practice, as a psychodynamic practitioner, I routinely consider the importance of their early experience. When first meeting them, I take a personal history sometimes referred to as an assessment, in which I get a sense of the origins of their relational experience. Within a framework of psychodynamic theory and clinical experience, I try to understand the context into which they were born and in which they spent their formative years. Psychodynamic thinking assumes that the past is unconsciously active in present relationships. Ideas such as transference and projections help to explain this process.

Transference has classically been described as the 'process by which a patient displaces on to his analyst feelings, ideas, etc., which derive from previous figures in his life' (Rycroft, 1972, p.168). Experiences of early relationships may be transferred on to people we encounter in the present, particularly when there is a perceived if not actual imbalance of power. A projection in the context of psychoanalysis is the 'process by which specific impulses, wishes, aspects of the self, or internal objects are imagined to be located in some object external to oneself' (Rycroft, 1972, pp.125-26).

One of the aims of the therapeutic relationship is to offer the client a reparative experience within a safe and confidential setting, through the therapist's initial

acceptance and gradual handing back of the client's projections and temporary dependence on the therapist. By the time the clinical work has ended, the transference has usually been diluted if not dissolved. Although patients are not necessarily immune to later transference relationships in which the past is active in the present, they are likely to have internalised a way of thinking about it which can act as a check and balance to their more primitive impulses.

Given that my participants, as incumbents, are in an exposed leadership role both in their church settings and in the local communities in which they live, they are bound to be on the receiving end of multiple projections. Although they may have had some teaching about psychological processes in ministry training, this is unlikely to have prepared them for the actual experience of managing these projections after they are ordained and by the time they are sufficiently experienced to have been appointed as incumbents. While serving their titles as curates, they will have had a training incumbent who may or may not have modelled good leadership. While they may well have felt the pressures of the role and needed time to adjust to being ordained, ultimate responsibility rested with their incumbent. Since Wesley Carr's classic examination of the role of leadership in the church (1985), there have been other useful guides to psychodynamic processes at work in pastoral settings (Carr, 1997; Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002; Rose, 2013; Collicutt, 2015). In addition, while there is some recognition of the value of seeking supervision with those trained to think about their pastoral situations, it is unlikely that most clergy will have internalised a psychodynamic way of thinking. Although there are many in leadership roles who intuitively understand the need not to be personally invested in exercising the latent power of their roles, clergy are particularly at risk. As Watts, Nye and Savage have pointed out, the dual roles of clergy put them in danger of a form of grandiosity:

As well as worship services and other church meetings, they meet for coffee after church, they may be involved in bereavements, family problems, celebration, counselling. The multiple roles the ministers may have in a person's life can lead to the minister becoming very important in the minds of both. (2002, p.69)

They may also meet parishioners both in a professional context and in a shared local setting such as their children's sports day. Watts, Nye and Savage add that the kind of grandiosity provoked by the multiple roles of clergy is 'inviting for anyone with

unmet emotional or ego needs' and can affect the quality of their judgement or a misreading of the parishioner's signals, as 'emotional vulnerability can be misread as a sexual invitation' (2002, p.69). While the subject of abuse by clergy is beyond the scope of this study, the recently published Gibb report about Peter Ball gives evidence both of clergy abuse and the collusive behaviour of the church authorities. It highlights the danger of charisma in a spiritual context. For example,

Ball was undoubtedly a man with charisma and a powerful orator... He inspired trust and commitment... He was also a manipulator and master of self-deceit... An ability to inspire without a corresponding capacity to understand the position of others made him dangerous. This is particularly the case in a religious context. (2017, pp.44-45)

This report highlights the danger of ignorance of psychological matters especially when clergy are described as 'charismatic'. When this is accompanied by a lack of self-knowledge, those to whom they minister may be vulnerable. In my practice, I have worked with spouses and junior colleagues of incumbents whose use of power and lack of empathy has caused emotional, psychological and sometimes spiritual harm.

Although none of the four who participated in my research seemed to have 'unmet emotional or ego needs', it remains the case that they were all routinely practising multiple roles. It is also very tiring to be on the receiving end of projections. One of the problems is that some church members may unconsciously look to their clergy to meet unmet needs dating back to earlier in their lives. They want to be looked after. This may help to explain the difficulties expressed by Participants C and D in response to my question about the challenges which they met in ministry. C said that there were *'too small a number of people willing to do things'* and spoke of *'difficulty finding officers'*. D said that it seemed to him that there was a need to *'be all things to all people in some sense, and make everybody feel that their particular issue... is important and you're giving it your full attention'*.

Each of these clergy sensed the responsibility being placed on them and seemed to accept the challenges as part of their role. However, I wonder what difference it might have made if they had been aware of the unconscious dynamics going on between their parishioners and them. The psychoanalyst Bion spoke of basic assumptions in group dynamics, one of which is dependence on the leader, as 'one

person is always felt to be in a position to supply the needs of the group, and the rest in a position in which their needs are supplied' (1961, p.74).

Looking through this lens, both B and D are picking up on this expectation that they will meet the needs of the others in their respective communities. While I would favour more education about the nature of these unconscious processes, it is relevant that these four participants chose to replenish the psychological energy used in leadership via their creative activity groups in which someone else was in charge and therefore on the receiving end of their projections. This suggests that they valued respite from being the one in charge. It also indicates a flexibility of mind, a point to which I shall return when discussing the fourth theme.

Another aspect of their role which my participants found challenging was their experience of having to deal with the negative feelings of others. While projections can be both positive and negative, it is, in my experience, the need to bear the negative feelings of others which is the more stressful aspect for many in leadership roles. Participant A's wry comment that *'providing that no more than 50 per cent of them will hate you at the same time, you're OK'*, seems to indicate that he has the capacity to bear being unpopular at times. Participant A described the need to make unpopular decisions as one of the challenges in his ministry, as did both B who had to come up with a consensus or decision which one party would not like and C who found herself in the role of mediator when people were in conflict after the death of a family member. The three participants managed the need to bear negative feelings in different ways. A used humour, while B and C acknowledged that they found it stressful. Their creative repair helped to resource them.

Those clergy who have some understanding of unconscious mechanisms when dealing with conflict often have the capacity to step back and realise that it is not usually a personal attack on them but a displacement of unresolved feelings of the others on to them as clergy, who are expected to be able to 'take it' without retaliating. However, many clergy find it difficult to accept the negative aspects of themselves, and therefore even harder to accept the negative aspects of others. This may partly be due to the high expectation that as Christians they aim to set a good example to others and that as priests they are expected to model Christ to their congregations (Cocksworth and Brown, 2006, p.77). One of the dangers of this is that they may begin to believe that they are above criticism, perhaps by idealising themselves via their role. This is one distortion. A contrasting distortion is that they

may judge themselves harshly and extend this negative judgement to others. Either of these distortions is unhealthy and may conflict with their pastoral role of accompanying others.

Participant A's capacity to bear the need to be unpopular with some people some of the time suggests to me that his sense of identity is quite secure and that he does not need to be affirmed all the time. However, Participant C was quite emphatic about her need to be anonymous in her theatre group. She feared that if she introduced herself as a vicar, she would not be accepted as herself. As the point of joining the group was to resource herself for her ministry role, she needed to join simply as a lover of amateur drama. That way she could have respite from the pressure of being the vicar. The issue seemed to be about being accepted as a person in her own right.

Two things strike me about this. First, it is my experience that many people suffer a loss of self-confidence after the breakdown of an important relationship and they often blame themselves, especially if a partner leaves them, as C's husband had done. From a psychological point of view, there are many parallels with the death of a partner, but without the support that bereaved people usually receive – so that for C to be able to join her theatre group and just be herself was particularly therapeutic. On the other hand, some clergy have difficulty being out of role, as if they find it hard to be a person who is not a minister, so that this wish of C to be herself out of role indicates some inner strength in her sense of identity. As an illustration of this, during a meeting of a group of students taking part in a foundation course in group analysis, one member spoke of the difficulty of speaking in that unstructured group, whereas she had no difficulty standing up in her church and leading worship. Her ministry role gave her confidence, whereas it had taken her most of the academic year to find the courage to tell us how difficult it was for her to speak as an ordinary member of the group in an unstructured experiential space.

Second, when I met Participant C, she narrated that by the time that she had been 'outed' as a vicar, as a result of the chance attendance at a funeral which she was conducting by another member of the theatre group, she had been a member for some time and felt accepted as herself, rather than as a local vicar. This seems to indicate that she had regained her self-confidence, so that she was able to integrate different aspects of herself whether on duty or not. My clinical experience of working with both women and men after the breakdown of an important relationship supports

this interpretation. Perhaps Participant C's difficulty was not only with her perception of her ministry role, as she reported, but also with a loss of self-confidence after her husband had left her. In any case membership of her theatre group helped her to feel accepted as a person independently of her ministry role.

Linked to the participants' perception of their ministry roles was their sense of vocation which presented itself in three main ways during the four interviews. These were first, in terms of practicalities; second, their feelings about their sense of vocation; and third, their inner sense of self and their way of life. I shall consider these in turn.

First, there were practicalities such as issues of childcare, the demands of family life and busyness. Regarding childcare, there were gender implications in my participants' description of their roles as parents. The two men had been in ministry much earlier in their adult life than the two women. They were both dedicated fathers, and Participant A spoke of the benefit that the way of life offered in terms of seeing more of his children and family than many of his parishioners did. This resonates with my own experience of having grown up in an Anglican vicarage. My father was much more available in the daytime during school holidays than the fathers of my friends. As meetings often took place in the evenings, and weekends were busy with weddings and Sunday services, he was less available then. Most of the clergy whose annual reviews I have conducted have been men and their experience mirrors that of my two male participants. While some of them share the childcare, their wives usually carry greater responsibility for it.

My two female participants had come into ministry after having had children and implied that they had been the primary carers then. For Participant C the experience of her husband's departure meant that she was both an incumbent and a single parent, as her children lived with her. My experience of seeing female clergy and ordinands in my practice has indicated that there is considerable impact on their families, when they have identified a calling to ministry after having had children. Although the interviews did not focus on the role of children in the lives of my participants, the extra pressure on female clergy was highlighted by Participant C's experience. The role of women in ministry was not something which was discussed in my conceptual framework, but as there is a link with the importance of having a voice, which occurs as part of my second theme, I shall return to it there.

Another practical aspect of clergy vocation was indicated when Participant D referred to the dilemma of how to spend his time off when he was not going out to a rehearsal or practice. He had to decide between playing the piano and helping with household tasks, a problem which occurred during his time off when he did not have a rehearsal. He was not complaining about this, but felt an obligation to prioritise his role as a husband and father rather than practise creative repair alone during his time off. While he did not mention the word 'guilt' the implication was there in his sense of obligation. I think that this is within the framework of clergy guilt, to which Participant A referred, when he said: '*clergy feel guilty if they take time off.*' At the time Participant A was talking about the value of having a rule of life in terms of protecting his days off, and mentioned that it dealt with the guilt that some clergy can feel about doing so. This hints at more than a diary clash and suggests that clergy need to be intentional about protecting their time off, having thought through the reasons for doing so. This reference to guilt was part of my conceptual framework for an earlier part of this research, when I conducted a focus group to explore the extent to which guilt was a factor in blocking the practice of creative repair. As I indicated in Paper 2 (Appendix B, p.182), the evidence was that for that particular group of clergy guilt was not a factor, but the comments in this data suggest that perhaps there is a need for further exploration in the future.

Busyness in ministry was the other element of the practical side of vocation. It has been described as 'one of the greatest temptations and pitfalls in the complexities of ministerial life' (Bruce, 2016, p.75). In response to my question about the challenges of ministry, Participant B named '*the amount of work and the fact that it is never finished*' as one of the stresses of ministry. This is one of the recurring themes in my practice. It is often linked to the difficulty in saying 'no' to requests, especially when there are staff shortages, as in the NHS. For clergy it is exacerbated by a wish to 'go the extra mile' which can be a justification for doing more than the situation requires, or may cover a resistance to sharing the workload. There is an additional temptation for those who are particularly gifted in preaching and public speaking or have a reputation for good pastoral work. This occurs in my experience of conducting annual reviews for clergy. For example for one person the heavy workload was difficult to reduce and there was a real danger of burnout. In time the person concerned decided to learn to accept fewer requests and develop an interest in the creative arts as a way of restoring the energy used up as a result of the busyness.

Linked to the problem of busyness were the potential diary clashes. Knowing the dangers of over-commitment and in order to benefit from their creative repair, my participants were intentional about putting their rehearsals or other creative activity group nights firmly in their diaries. Their comments indicated that this was something which was learnt from experience and did not come automatically. Participant D was most articulate about this, as his experience of not having played in either a band or an orchestra during his curacy led him to resolve never to let that happen in the future. This ranged from playing in a jazz band as well as singing in a choir during his year in Africa to entering his rehearsal evening in his diary before it was time for him to engage fully in his current post.

The practical aspects of the participants' view of their sense of vocation indicate that both gender factors and habits of busyness lie behind the difficulty in practising creative repair. In addition there is a reference to clergy guilt which would be worthy of further research. My four participants had learnt from experience that unless they were intentional about protecting their time off, it could be subsumed by other family obligations. When discussing the value of a rule of life as part of my third theme, I shall suggest that there needs to be a disciplined approach to the way in which clergy practise creative repair if it is to sustain their ministry routinely.

The second aspect of their vocation indicated by my participants involves their emotions about fulfilling their vocation, especially at significant beginnings in the living out of their vocation. After giving examples of this I shall make connections with other important beginnings to explain them. These beginnings go back to our arrival in the world.

Participant A's decision to put all of his cameras away and get rid of the negatives as they represented '*an old way of life*' was quite extreme, but I recognise it from my own experience. Believing that I had to give up everything when I had discerned a calling to the Anglican priesthood meant that I was willing to give up my clinical practice and enter residential training. When I met with the bishop after being recommended for training, he was very clear that I should join the part-time training. Although there was a financial saving for the diocese if I did this, he was also emphatic that my counselling and psychotherapy work was 'a ministry in its own right' and later he referred people to my practice. This taught me that being willing to give up everything may be an understandable response to a sense of vocation, but may not be the best way forward. Common to both examples is the fact that it was

an initial response to the discernment of a vocation to the priesthood. This first response is characteristic of the nature of beginnings.

There were two other references to beginnings in my data. The first was Participant B's statement that she had stopped going to her choir '*once I was ordained, because I couldn't commit to a regular, weekly activity, an evening to practise, then concerts*'. It was a continuation of this which informed her initial expectation that she could not attend her choir on a Friday evening after being appointed to her present post. The second was Participant D's experience of his first ministry post, as a curate, when he was unable to play either of his musical instruments in a band or orchestra. This informed his decision at the beginning of his present post to find out the times of rehearsals of a local brass band or orchestra and to put those dates in his diary before any church meetings.

In my conceptual framework I did not include literature about the nature of beginnings, as it was not indicated by my research question. However, it has emerged from the transcripts that there is a connection between my participants' experience of their creative repair and key points at certain beginnings. Whether it was A's initial vocation to the priesthood, B's belief that she could not go to her choir, or D's decision after his curacy always to prioritise time for his band practices or orchestral rehearsals, beginnings were common ground in these reactions. In my practice I have observed that beginnings can stir up feelings which can be unpredictable and overwhelming and therefore distort our thinking.

Elsewhere I have written about the importance of beginnings in a ministry context and the value of establishing the practice of creative repair during initial ministerial education (Holmes, A. 2015). The same principle applies to other beginnings. Over the years, I have applied my experience of infant observation and the work of the psychoanalyst Winnicott to a theory of the importance of beginnings. I have observed that there is a link between our childhood template and important new beginnings later in life.³ Any important beginning echoes our very early entry into the world at birth. As we grow and develop we depend on others to respond to our needs. Winnicott has written about the importance of the 'good enough' mother who attends to her baby without anticipating her or his needs (1964). It is her task to

³ The general importance of life stages was first considered within psychoanalysis by Freud and has been developed by others, especially Erikson (1950) and Jacobs (1986).

create a safe place for her baby which is very intense at first, but gradually allows the baby to gain confidence in her or his own voice. It is the baby's task to train the mother in how much she or he can take in so as not to be left under- or over-fed or -stimulated. If the mother is preoccupied with her own problems or not interested in her baby, then this opportunity is lost and the feeding becomes mechanical and partial. Whatever the circumstances, the baby's primary task is to survive and we know from the work of Bowlby (1979) that there is an instinct to attach to whoever or whatever is available to keep going. I shall refer to this again in the context of my participants' attachment to their creativity groups as part of the fifth theme. As babies we take in whatever there is, so that if, for example, our mother is depressed, we take in the symptoms of that depression. Nowadays neuroscience is confirming what we have known intuitively for centuries, namely that we need to be held and loved and accompanied as we begin to make sense of our experience (Gerhardt, 2004).

From this it may be deduced that for many people there may be problems in successfully negotiating other new beginnings, such as going to school, embarking on an important adult intimate relationship and any significant change of job, house move or professional identity. If we have been well enough accompanied by our parents and significant others, then we will be able to draw on that experience and accompany ourselves through future transitions. However, we are all still very vulnerable to unconscious connections with our entry into the world and the anxiety which that can provoke. As a response to this we may overestimate the need to please those to whom we are accountable in other new beginnings. Participants A and B were willing to make sacrifices at the beginning of training and the new post respectively. Caught up in the excitement and/or anxiety around their new beginnings, they offered more than was required by the new situation. Later they changed their minds as they reclaimed their hobbies as essential to their well-being. Participant D did not give up his hobby, but had no opportunity to enjoy it and noticed its absence as he negotiated his curacy, another beginning. I believe that the literature about beginnings and my participants' feelings about what their vocation demanded of them at important points in their ministry helps to explain my participants' resolve to practise their particular creative activity having either given up or not had access to it at important beginnings in their ministry.

The third aspect of my participants' vocation arose from their inner sense of self and their view of their faith as a way of life. For A, it seemed at first that his vocation to

the priesthood prohibited a continuation of his photography. He stated that *'I literally put all of my cameras away and I got rid of the negatives... almost a ritual burning of lots of my stuff... because for me... that was... an old way of life'*. At another point in the narrative he explained that he had once spent time with a monastic ecumenical community and had wondered about joining them, then realised that it was not for him. The monastic requirement for a total giving up of a previous way of life may have informed his assumption that a vocation to the priesthood involved giving up his *'old way of life'*. However, as he matured, he realised that the two could be reconciled. His photography represented an essential part of the person he was, so that he had deprived himself of more than was required in getting rid of his cameras.

Participant B said that she gave up her choir *'once I was ordained, because I couldn't commit to a regular, weekly activity, an evening to practise, then concerts'*. Whereas I referred earlier to the importance of beginnings, here I am highlighting the phrase *'once I was ordained'* to demonstrate the connection which she had made between ordination and an implied change in her way of life. The assumption was that unless it happened to be her day off, she had to make all other evenings available for church meetings. It was only after she realised that the Friday evening rehearsals of her choir rarely clashed with church meetings that she reclaimed the choir because she realised that she was missing it and that it did her good.

Participant D referred specifically to his way of life as a Christian. Playing was an expression of his faith and he would pray before a concert, seeing all of life as an act of worship. This sense of a Christian vocation which is more than his role as a priest seems to indicate a functional rather than an ontological view of the priesthood (Cocksworth and Brown, 2006, p.5). A follower of Christ is first called into *'our baptismal identity with Christ as we share in his life and then begin to walk in his way'* (p.6). For D music is *'something which aids worship, which enables one to connect with God spiritually'*, so that playing is vocational as there is a clear connection between playing music and life as worship. He completed that sentence by adding that music *'also refreshes you emotionally and mentally and in other ways'*.

This leads me into my second theme of the importance of creativity.

Theme 2: The importance of creativity

Across the interviews, my participants indicated that their practice of creative repair brought personal benefits in terms of their individual, social and spiritual health and benefits to their ministry both in terms of their actual ministry setting and through what their enhanced personal benefits contributed to their embodied leadership role.

Evidence of the importance of creativity was communicated in the interviews via the capacity for self-reflection of my four participants. All of them had reflected on their past experience and observed the impact of either their decision not to practise their particular form of creative repair or their lack of opportunity so to do, as in the case of D during his curacy. This observation of the absence of creative repair had highlighted the importance of it for each of them and informed their resolve to protect it in future. Although there was no mention of theological reflection as such, this capacity to reflect on their experience, which has been described as ‘vitally important’ (Rose, 2013, p.21), may well have been encouraged during their ministry training and subsequent continuing ministerial development. This reflective capacity is essential in pastoral settings, for ‘a good pastor is not someone who never makes mistakes, but someone who has the courage to reflect on those mistakes and what can be learned from them’ (Rose, 2013, p.8).

All my participants were reflective either by nature or training, as was evidenced both by their willingness to take part in my research and by the thoughtful quality of their responses to my interview questions. As they reflected on times when they had not been able to practise their particular creative activity, they perceived it as a mistake from which they learned. This leads naturally into a discussion of what it was that they gained from their creative repair.

The importance of creativity as outlined in the previous chapter can be summarised as resourcing my participants both personally and in their ministry roles. All four referred to the impact of their creative activity on their health and well-being. Their responses ranged from the more extreme reference to the need to protect their sanity to a more regular way of sustaining themselves. For A, who had experienced burnout when a professional photographer, the comment that his creative activity ‘*keeps me sane*’ was no flippant reference to his mental health. Both he and B, who had experienced a personal crisis caused by stress during her present post, understood from their own experience what it could mean to have a mental health

crisis, and this seems to have informed their future behaviour. This connects with my original concept of creative repair, which I first adopted in the dissertation for my MA in Pastoral Theology (Holmes, A.C. 2009b). Then I was focusing on the prevention of clergy burnout and the participants in that study recognised that a prophylactic approach which had prioritised their creative needs 'would have made an enormous difference' (Holmes, A.C. 2009b, p.36).

My practice has taught me that a crisis can lead to an increase in self-awareness and a re-evaluation of what will promote health and well-being. This may include a recommendation of psychological help and many of my patients come to see me as a result of visiting their doctors. In my experience, there are few who come as part of their self-conscious personal development, unless it is a training requirement or part of their continuing professional development. Reflecting on my clinical work with clergy, it is often a personal bereavement which triggers the desire to seek help. This is not surprising as so much pastoral work involves visiting the bereaved and taking funerals. A recent personal bereavement can overload their capacity to accompany others in their grief and takes time to process. Also the circumstances of some bereavement encounters, such as those involving untimely death or suicide, can be difficult to process and be a trigger for seeking professional help. Although the need for pastoral supervision is not part of this study, it is worth echoing the recommendation of others (Lamdin and Tilley, 2007; Rose, 2013; Paterson and Rose, 2014; Leach and Paterson, 2015) that clergy be supported in this way.

When I see clergy for their annual reviews, an impending crisis can sometimes be averted through recognising that patterns of work and leisure which used to work well enough are no longer effective. With the pressure felt by many clergy to increase numbers of churchgoers and the experience, as Participant B put it, of *'the amount of work and the fact that it is never finished'*, it can be easy to overlook the gradual toll of overwork. By looking closely at the ministers' patterns of work and leisure and identifying a need to revise them, it is important to help them to find their own examples of what for Participant D was the benefit of his creative repair in *'making music, so it's something different, it's a change of activity and I think in some way it's refreshing'*.

For Participant C, the crisis came from the breakdown of her marriage, the underlying causes of which were not mentioned. The fact was that her husband had left her. It was as a result of that personal crisis that her work consultant had

recommended that she find an interest outside of the parish and home settings. Having worked as a couple counsellor for over 30 years, I am aware of the impact on those who are unable to repair and redefine their relationship after a crisis. It is usual for both men and women to lose confidence in themselves after a relationship breakdown (Litvinoff, 1993, p.147). Reading between the lines, the need for C to keep going both for her children and in her ministry helped her to re-focus and her comment that her theatre group had really helped her to recover indicates that she was recovering her sense of self as a person when not in the role of mother or vicar. She said that joining her theatre group had given her greater confidence after her husband had left. By entering into the roles of others on stage, she has gained both respite from and catharsis for her own feelings. In a recent study of the relationship between the actor's own emotions and those of her character, Turri has used the framework of psychoanalytic thinking to 'solve the conundrum of the question of feeling in the art of the actor' (2017, p.98). As an alternative to the role of transference in a therapeutic relationship, the actor 'becoming the emotions of the character generates an act of understanding' (p.100). Not only does this help the actor, it also benefits the spectator, as what is, intriguingly, called an act of 'interpretation' in theatre jargon is 'aimed at the impersonation of the character in front of an audience. It is therefore the emotional transaction between spectator and actor to which, ultimately, the actor's work of interpretation applies' (p.100). Thus by being part of her theatre group which rehearses for performances for an audience, Participant C resources both herself and the group's audiences. In addition, her reference to the importance of *'filling your well so that you can be poured out for others'* also indicates that she understood the importance of ongoing resourcing, exactly what this study is about. This comment reflects a sense of balance between working for others and the need to replenish the emotional and psychological energy used in ministry. Her saying this in the context of her theatre group supports the suggestion that the practice of creative repair in a group helps to sustain ministry.

Participant B's comment that her singing gave her *'a sense of well-being'* is something which I recognise from both my clinical work and as a spiritual director. One example is a person who, after a period of work on her relationships, especially a difficult one with her mother, which had undermined her confidence, decided to join a jazz choir. That became central to her week and complemented the therapeutic work which she was doing with me.

Both Participant B and my patient experienced the value of singing with others. The musicologist Norton has presented research about the benefits of group singing: 'Singing together presumes breathing and rendering pitch and rhythm in coordinated fashion. When we sing together, we may also give voice to a set of words that is deeply meaningful' (Norton, 2016, p.76).

Participant B specified that her membership of her choir meant that she practised singing regularly and that this was very useful when it was her turn to lead the liturgy, which involved singing the *sursum corda* in the Eucharist. During the holiday choir breaks, her voice became '*scratchy*'. At first sight this seems to be a purely functional view of the benefit of her creative repair and, at a functional level, given that she was approaching retirement, it is especially important to practise singing when the voice is ageing. My own singing teacher is researching into the ageing voice and I benefit from her specialist interest. It is her view that vocal exercises can also help those whose role involves using the speaking voice in public as well as those who have to sing the liturgy.

Beyond the personal wish to sing the liturgy as well as possible, it is the view of Arnold, an Anglican priest, theologian and musician, that excellence makes a difference as an integral part of worship. Having interviewed a range of musicians and scholars on the subject of the role of sacred music in a mostly secular society, he writes,

For those who perform sacred music within the religious settings of church, cathedral or chapel services, the notion of performance is embraced, emphasizing the duty and service of professionals to an overall excellence of liturgy in which music plays its role amongst the words, preaching and sacraments. (2014, p.148)

For Participant B, to be able to sing the *sursum corda*, inviting the congregation to 'Lift up your hearts' at the beginning of the prayer of consecration in the Eucharist in a non-scratchy voice allows her to be of unobtrusive service to the liturgy, which is thereby enhanced.

Beyond the functional and sacramental role of not wanting her voice to be '*scratchy*', Participant B opens up a wider discussion of the notion of voice. At another point in the interview, she spoke of the way in which she could:

'sing out with confidence and that just made such a big difference to me, something to do with being in a different position... on this occasion I was right in the middle of the front row, so very prominent and I thought... I've really got to go for this... and it gave me a huge boost to realise I could sing out with confidence and feeling'.

This notion of voice is a key one in feminist literature, which was not part of my original conceptual framework. The psychologist Gilligan, curious about the choice of women not to speak up in relationships, writes that 'by restricting their voices, many women are wittingly or unwittingly perpetuating a male-voiced civilization and an order of living that is founded on disconnection from women' (1993, p.xi).

Through her work, which dates back to the 1970s and was first published in 1982, Gilligan aimed to bring women's voices into psychological theory and to 'reframe the conversation between women and men' (1993, p.xxvi). Perhaps it is relevant that Participant C, whose husband had left her, commented when referring to the protection of her rehearsal evenings: *'it's partly about saying, "Actually I'm important enough to resource that."*' If she had, as Gilligan indicated in the case of other women, restricted her voice in her marriage in order 'to appear "selfless"' (1993, p.x), then this recognition that C was important enough to resource her creative repair was evidence of a re-evaluation of her needs after her marriage had ended.

Among the benefits of creative repair, my participants all found that their practice of creative repair was both an expression of their wish to model themselves on Jesus and a way of modelling good practice for others. This incarnational way of living their ministry was not named as such in my conceptual framework. It reflects what Williams has referred to as the healing aspect of theology: 'healing is what makes it possible for an embodied spirit to praise God in community with other embodied spirits' (2007, p.9).

It is his view that the art of theology is to trace how God inhabits flesh by 'creating living relationship within himself' (Williams, p.5). Jesus is central to this as God fully and unequivocally inhabits that life which is Jesus of Nazareth, that death and that resurrection which belong to Jesus of Nazareth and which make all the difference to your body and mine so that our own inhabiting of the world changes (p.11).

Participant A made this clear in his comment about the need to be attentive to the Holy Spirit when discerning the need to let some churches die:

‘I had to be ready to ride on the wave when the Spirit moves and that’s a reassuring thing which I share with other clergy, going through that, saying, “You know we are about death and resurrection, actually that’s what we’re all about.”’

My participants indicated that drawing on the example of Jesus in terms of a balance between active and contemplative ministry, as he varied between being with the crowds and being with a few friends or alone in prayer, was sustaining. Part of my conceptual framework was the importance of having a rule of life, drawing on the monastic tradition. In an earlier paper I considered the view of the early Church of the active and contemplative aspects of a faithful Christian life (see Paper 2, Appendix B, pp.184-185). I indicated the key role of Gregory the Great in seeing the active and contemplative life as equal and affirming: ‘a union of the active and contemplative lives, not a replacement of the former by the latter’ (Paffenroth, 1999, p.3). Living out this balance was of benefit to my participants, both in terms of the intrinsic benefit to their health and well-being and as a way of following the example of Jesus in their living out of their priestly ministry.

This need for balance between active ministry and creative repair also resonates with my professional practice both with other clergy and lay Christians. This is particularly relevant in ministry review sessions, but also comes up in either pastoral supervision or sessions of spiritual direction. At times it has been appropriate to think about it with clergy psychotherapy patients, especially when they are emerging from the deeper work and we are beginning to think about how they might resource themselves routinely. It may not always be by means of the creative arts *per se*, but may include other forms of reparation, such as study, walking or gardening.

My participants indicated that they made a connection between God and creativity. For example, Participant C commented on the importance of using her God-given gifts, not all of which could be expressed in ministry, thus indicating her belief in the importance of those gifts to the whole of herself. Participant A’s belief in the parallel experience of his spiritual life and his photography indicated a deep understanding of the God-given nature of creativity in general and his own expression of his art in particular. His enthusiasm about planning his day off highlights this understanding,

articulated by Williams thus: ‘the maker of the world has made it possible for us to inhabit the world more fully, more deeply, more joyfully than we could ever have possibly imagined’ (2007, p.11).

A belief in the God-given nature of creativity is central to my own theology and a core reason for engaging in this doctoral study. In his commentary on the work of Maritain, Williams has written:

God makes a world in which created processes have their own integrity, so that they do not need God’s constant direct intervention to be themselves. At a deeper level, it assumes a unity between grace and nature: the integrity of a created process will, if pursued honestly and with integrity, be open to God’s purposes. (2005, p.9)

This belief in the integrity of the creative process informs my work with those who may or may not have a Christian faith. It is based on the assumption that if my patients or other clients have a suppressed wish to be creative, then it is an outcome of our work that they express it more fully. As they feel more fully themselves, they are better able to use their gifts.

Evidence that my participants valued their practice of creative repair can be discerned in their advice to their colleagues. They all had experience of training others, whether formally as training incumbents for curates, or as local supervisors of ordinands on a parish placement. In addition, Participant A had served for a term as area dean, a role with a pastoral and administrative role for other clergy in the area. He cited times when he had to advise other clergy about the importance of taking time off after their lack of a healthy balance had caused them to become sick through stress and overwork. Participant D’s exhortation to ordinands to make sure that they have an outside interest, whether sport or music, came from his reflection on his own experience. It is likely that his experience as a curate soon after ordination was informing him in his advice to others not yet ordained.

This resonates with my experience of leading workshops with both ordinands in a local theological college and curates in two dioceses. My first vocation and formation was as an educator and I am intentional about the need to enable others to learn, whether in the formal setting of the classroom or lecture theatre or in the less formal setting of workshops. Clergy are mindful of the need to model good practice, so that

there is an authenticity in the advice which my participants gave to those in their care. They passed on what they had learnt from experience.

The participants indicated that their particular form of creative repair impacted on their ministry in various beneficial ways which included the very functional and the missional due to a holistic connection between the person and the role. First, there were benefits to the functional aspects of the participants' ministry. Participants B and D spoke of the way in which their musical involvement impacted on their organisation of liturgy, both within their churches and outside when it helped them to liaise with others. This is something which I recognise from my own experience of growing up with a clergyman father who was also a gifted musician. One of his early roles was that of Succentor in Leicester Cathedral and a great friendship grew between him and the cathedral organist. Although this happened before I was born, the friendship between the families persisted beyond that cathedral role and nourished my father in his next parish in which he helped a musical tradition to develop and supported the installation of a new pipe organ. The presence of a musical incumbent can often enhance the music of a church community. It can also raise the possibility of tensions, as I shall indicate later, a factor of which both participants B and D seemed to be mindful and which I shall discuss as part of my fourth theme on the role of flexibility in leadership.

Second, for Participant A, there was a missional benefit to his practice of creative repair. He described the way in which, through his photography group they *'did have a few people that ended up coming to church, though that wasn't my goal'*. It was very important for him to meet people in non-church settings and for them to see him involved in the photography group, as the vicar of the local community, whether or not he was engaged in a formal ministry task. He valued *'showing that clergy do other things apart from sing hymns, read the Bible and take funerals'*. When engaged in shared creativity he could meet people in that context and develop a rapport, so that it was easier for them to approach him when they had a pastoral need. This resonates with my experience of mental health chaplaincy. When I joined a knitting group run by an occupational therapist, it was an opportunity to engage with service users in a non-chaplaincy setting. They compared their skill with my lack of it and it made it easier for some of them to speak to me about spiritual concerns.

For Participant D the relational impact of his practice of creative repair outside church communities was important. It helped his liaison with the local brass band when arranging the annual Remembrance Sunday service. This relational, missional view of ministry has been described by Cocksworth and Brown as central to Christian identity (2006, p.5). They write: 'All that we are in Christ and all that we do for Christ arise from a vocation, a calling into a certain sort of relation to him – a relationship of extraordinary grace' (p.6).

My participants believed that in practising their particular form of creative repair they were '*being like Jesus*' in terms of '*filling your well*' in order to be available for others. There were also unintended benefits in terms of their relational ministry both inside and outside of their church settings. If their practice of creative repair had been sporadic, it could not have resourced them and their ministry in a sustainable way. For that it was necessary to build their creative activity into the regular, habitual balance of their way of life. This leads me to my third theme, the importance of rhythm and self-discipline.

Theme 3: The importance of rhythm and self-discipline

In my conceptual framework, I defined creative repair as 'regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing energy expended in sensitive pastoral care' (Holmes, A.C. 2011, p.77). One of my assumptions in the practice of creative repair is the importance of regularity or a rhythm. This was the case in my earlier research and I was curious to discover whether it would be reinforced in this study. The evidence from the data is that the rhythm was assumed by my participants. Three out of my four participants attended a weekly rehearsal or meeting. Both B's choir and C's theatre group met weekly, as did D's orchestral rehearsals or band practices. However, for A, his photography group met monthly and after he felt the need to hand that over to others, his meetings with other photographers seemed to have been on more of an *ad hoc* basis. Yet the weekly practice of his individual creative repair on his day off was important to him and he planned it carefully and sometimes with excitement. He valued the rhythm of it and the fact that it was built into his Franciscan rule of life, so that it was part of his spiritual discipline.

One of my key concepts is a rule of life and one of its benefits is that it offers a framework within which to ensure a balance between different aspects of ministry

and personal health and well-being. Having a rule of life has also been described as 'a helpful framework for growth in holiness as well as a container for our scatteredness' (Cocksworth and Brown, 2006, p.146).

My four participants indicated that they had learnt from experience that unless they protected their time off and maintained their boundaries, they would not be able to rely on their creative repair to resource them. Participant C's use of the word '*sacred*' may not have been an intended reference to the recognition of the spiritual nature of her creativity, but suggests that it was part of what she held to be sacred. As all four participants had indicated elsewhere in the interviews that they had experienced earlier in their ministry what they had lost when they were unable to practise their creative activity, their self-imposed discipline of protecting time off was one response.

When invited as an ordained group analyst to lead occasional workshops on creative repair as part of self-care, I have sometimes met resistance to the idea of a weekly or regular time for their chosen interest. For example, I led one with a group of ordinands engaged in a part-time ministry course, who were obliged to attend it as part of their training. While I was clear that my definition of creative repair for the purpose of that workshop was not exclusively about the creative arts, but more about being creative in their leisure, some of them did not believe that they could set time aside each week for their interests. What they did indicate was that it seemed easier for their local clergy to take their day off than it was for them. Their tone indicated some frustration with if not envy of their clergy. Unlike ordinands in a full-time residential training, who had left their sending church behind, many of them were still active in their local churches as well as working full-time or part-time. Although I gave them a seven-minute experience of listening to music, during which time they could walk round and look at pictures or other artefacts, and they responded positively to this exercise, they could not imagine applying the principle of even a brief experience of creative repair to their weekly rhythm. It may be that some self-examination would have exposed some unhealthy habits. As Cocksworth and Brown put it: 'We all have a rhythm of life in some form or other, perhaps by default, and we do well to examine what it is and how it guides us to holiness' (2006, p.146).

Some tutors indicated that they were not very good at modelling good practice to their students. This was honest and a clue to their own lack of good examples. In my

earlier research, two of my MA focus-group members who were involved in the training of Anglican ordinands commented on the difficulty in persuading students to take time off to engage in creative pursuits. One factor which may help to explain this apparent lack of useful templates has emerged in the study by Amanda Bloor, who explored how a group of Anglican ordinands assessed what it might mean to 'put on' priesthood. Her long-term research project revealed that many of them measured their vocation not against theory or theology, but against the example of priests whom they had known and admired. This was the case whether they came from evangelical or more catholic backgrounds. She writes:

Whatever the underlying theology, it was the attractiveness of the example provided by particular priests that drove aspiring clergy to consider ordination. The individuals they had observed became templates of what dedicating oneself to Christian service could involve. (2013, p.19)

Bloor found that these idealised views of ministry were not usually modified during the formation process. This could be interpreted as an example of the philosopher Girard's mimetic theory 'which holds that I desire "according to the other" (my desire is directed towards what the other desires – I yearn for the same object as she does, whatever it may be)' (Kirwan, 2004, p.33). If the template of the priests who had inspired the ordinands is as influential as Bloor's research suggests, then ministry training may need to give this proper attention, so that, to use psychoanalytic language, the latent may become manifest, a pre-requisite for change. In a later chapter, I shall suggest that any change in the future training of ordinands will need to be intentional. If educators are to model healthy practice it will be important for them to reflect on and perhaps modify their own working habits. Perhaps there also needs to be space in the curriculum for a focus on role models and the need to critique the automatic imitation of former clergy whom they have encountered.

One aspect of self-discipline is the setting and maintaining of appropriate boundaries. In my clinical work, both with patients and trainees, the issue of boundaries is one which is often discussed. Precise time boundaries for the beginning and end of sessions and for regular breaks from the work are part of the ground rules of psychodynamic practice. Although this is less precise and more fluid in the practice of pastoral care, as the task has a different focus, the principle of setting limits is still useful. In supervision sessions with specialist nurses working with the terminally ill, it has sometimes been necessary to challenge their work

culture of getting into the office early and leaving late, or writing up notes at home in the evenings. If unchecked, these habits, combined with the emotionally demanding nature of their work, would lead to fatigue or illness and the need to take time off work in order to recover.

One problem for parish clergy is that their home is also the property of the diocese. Although Participant D mentioned that he was able to work in an office in the church pastoral centre nearby, he still found it hard to give himself time off at home. During two of my interviews there were phone calls, which were diverted on to an answering service, but they still interrupted our conversation. This reminded me of my own experience of growing up in a vicarage before the days of answerphones. Coming from the north of England, my parents had 'dinner' in the middle of the day and there were frequent phone calls, as people could contact my father in their lunch hour. Despite my mother's irritation, my father always went to answer the phone, so that his food had to be kept warm. The same happened when people came to the door. This might seem minor, but it instilled in me the value of uninterrupted family time.

I only realised when training as a group analyst the extent to which I had seen the parish as the boundary of my home and understood why, despite being an introvert, I relate easily to groups. During a large group session, a fellow student spoke of having grown up in a South American village, so that she assumed that the village was her family. I had a moment of recognition, understanding that the parish was my extended family, which has helped me to think with other clergy and their spouses about how to reconcile pastoral obligations with the need for protected time off.

This point about protected time for creativity was illustrated by Participant B's statement that the weekly experience of going with her husband to her choir rehearsal, which was followed by social time, made it '*a complete break*', so that even if she was tired the next day, she was '*tired in a different way*'. This indicates the value of her creative repair in resourcing her socially, when she experienced herself as person with a shared interest with her husband, when she was out of her ministerial role and with other people with whom they have a longstanding friendship.

When Participant A was talking about the value of having a rule of life in terms of protecting his days off, he mentioned that it dealt with the guilt. Many clergy find it

hard to value their time off and creative pursuits as important, compared to the need to bring more people into church, do more pastoral visits and raise funds to pay for the maintenance of buildings and the parish share, which goes to the diocese to pay for clergy stipends and training. Participant A indicated that, as his time off and creative repair were part of his rule of life, the rule itself released him from the guilty feeling that he should be working even on his day off. Given that he enjoyed ministry and described himself as an extrovert, his rule of life acted as a check and balance against a tendency to overwork or never leave the benefice. This also helped him to let go of being the vicar, which leads me to my next theme, my participants' flexibility in a leadership role.

Theme 4: The participants' flexibility in a leadership role

My participants, as incumbents, are all in a leadership role, not only in terms of leading liturgy and being responsible for pastoral care and the maintenance of the buildings entrusted to them, but as significant members of their local community. Their dual roles can put them at risk of a kind of grandiosity (Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002, p.69). Leaders of groups can often be idealised or put on a pedestal. When discussing my participants' view of their role, part of my first theme, I cited one of Bion's basic assumptions in group dynamics, that of dependence on the leader (1961, p.74). When working as a group analyst, part of my task is to allow this at the beginning when a group is new and anxious, but gradually hand the power back to the group, especially in a time-limited group which is approaching its end. This usually works well when conducting groups in a professional setting, but when it comes to congregations, there can be a difficulty.

In congregations, there is often some collusion between the people who wish their minister to do everything for them and those ministers whose need to feel valued can blind them to the danger of this: 'because the priestly symbol is itself human, and because it is located in human society, the risk that it will be distorted by cultural projection is unavoidable. It can only be met by a continual vigilance' (Mason, 1992, p.121). A Jewish group-analytic colleague has indicated to me that there was a similar problem in her faith tradition for rabbis of whom too much is expected. Some of this is due to the 'inherent tension between leadership and followership' (Obholzer with Miller, 2004, p.33). If collusion between congregations and ministers is to be avoided, some awareness of the 'presence and workings of unconscious personal, interpersonal, group, inter-group and intra-institutional processes among both

leaders and followers' (p.38) is desirable. Although this awareness may be the case in some organisational settings, and be true of some clergy, I do not believe it to be widespread in church organisations.

Clergy with sufficient ego strength are less likely to collude with the way in which congregations tend to look to them to *'be all things to all people'*. When considering the power of unconscious processes, I indicated that my participants did not seem to be invested in being in charge all the time. They chose to resource themselves in creative activity groups in which someone else was on the receiving end of projections. Not only did this suggest that they valued respite from leadership role, but it also indicated a flexibility of mind.

The phrase 'flexibility of mind' is one which I have drawn from the idea of figure/ground which was part of my conceptual framework, an idea which is common both to group analysis and gestalt theory. 'In the figure/ground what is included in figure and what in ground does not remain static, but changes in the course of a dynamic development' (Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, 1951, p.56). In order to see both figure and ground, it is necessary to be able to move between the different perspectives, a capacity which assumes a flexible mind-set. Here I am applying it to my participants' intuitive capacity to move between different modes, sometimes being in a leadership role in ministry and sometimes being a member of their creative activity group. They also demonstrated their flexibility of mind by their capacity to move between different roles within their respective creative activity groups.

It was clear that my participants valued being in a membership rather than a leadership role in their creative activity groups as evidenced by various comments in the interview data. For example, Participant A moved from his photography group because he was *'in teaching mode all the time... I wanted to move to learning something myself.'* Participant C not only welcomed the opportunity to be anonymous in her theatre group, but also valued the inclusive culture of her particular group and the expectation that all members would do the work of stage hands and set builders as well as acting. By contrast, both B and D indicated some frustration when they tried to speak as musicians when discussing particular aspects of music in liturgy, but found that their opinions were given extra weight by their choir members. In B's case this was in her recreational choir when it sang in a cathedral and for D it was within his church setting. Their very frustration indicates

that they did not have an investment in being in a leadership role *per se*. Although D's frustration was not expressed directly in his creative group practice, in his mind he wanted to be in musician rather than incumbent mode. His inherent capacity not to be in charge when being a musician was clearly demonstrated by his comments about the flexibility required by his role when playing the trumpet in his orchestra. When he described the different ways of interpreting a *piano* section in the music, he demonstrated a capacity to be flexible according to the musical needs of the score. Sometimes *piano* meant playing quietly and sometimes it meant a less quiet solo section for his instrument. This is a double example of the figure/ground motif shared by both group analysis and gestalt thinking (Behr and Hearst, 2005; Taylor, 2014). Not only is D able to be in a non-leadership role, but he can also move in and out of roles within his creative activity group.

Another example of the participants' capacity to move between different roles in their creativity group is illustrated by Participant A's discovery that it was not possible for him to move between different roles in his photography group, which he had helped to found. He knew that he needed to receive and not be in a teaching role and thought carefully about how to facilitate that change. Nevertheless, having found other ways for meeting his need to be resourced, he was willing to return afterwards, either informally or as a result of an invitation to give a talk. This flexibility contrasts with his initial need to give up all photography when exploring his vocation to ministry.

In Kleinian psychoanalytic thinking there is an understanding that to move from a paranoid/schizoid position to a depressive position is a sign of growing maturity (Zaretsky, 1998, p.39). The first is the technical term for an 'either... or' position and the second is a sign of a 'both... and' position. This has its parallel in groups and the basic assumptions which may characterise groups which are anxious rather than more secure groups which are working well. One of these basic assumptions is dependence on the leader. Although Participant A is unlikely to have been familiar with this theory, he had an intuitive understanding of the need to remove himself from the photography group which lacked formal structures, in order for someone else to take over the running of it.

Participants B, C and D all indicated their capacity to move between being a leader in their ministry role and enjoy being a member of their respective creativity groups. This flexibility is expected of group analysts. One of my roles as a group conductor

for a foundation course includes both conducting one of the small groups each week and being a member of an occasional larger or median group conducted by another colleague. This means that I am free to participate in the group and let go of my role as group conductor. Although I am careful not to reveal details of my personal life, which might compromise my role as the conductor of the small group, this experience is of interest to the small-group members and helps them to be less dependent on me as the course develops. As a group analyst this flexible approach to the leadership role is professional and intentional. For my participants, it happened intuitively and experientially. By living their membership of their creative activity groups routinely, they had respite from the burdens of leadership as well as resourcing themselves creatively.

My participants' capacity not to be invested in the need to be in charge for its own sake was demonstrated by their comments about their membership of their creative activity groups, equivalent to the followership roles of members of their congregations. Although this shows that they were probably flexible people who were able to be both figure and ground independently of their creativity groups, I believe that their membership of a creative activity group and their commitment to regular attendance helped to reinforce this capacity and acted as a check and balance against the potentially exhausting temptation to try to be indispensable.

Theme 5: The participants' attachment to their creative activity groups

My final theme is my participants' attachment to their creativity groups. This was a surprising revelation from the data and one which may lead to some new thinking around creative repair groups. Whereas I am used to thinking of the importance of attachment in one-to-one clinical or supervisory work, I have not thought about it much in regard to groups. While there has been some thinking by group analysts about the application of attachment theory to groups (Glenn, 1987; Marrone, 1994, 2014), a leading group analyst has welcomed my observation of my participants' attachment to their creative activity groups as a possible future contribution to group-analytic theory.⁴ Attachment theory originated in the thinking of the psychoanalyst Bowlby and 'was formulated in order to explain observed facts in a way which was more coherent with what was observed' (Marrone, 2014, p.28) than

⁴ This was an informal conversation with Arturo Esquerro at the launch of his book on Bowlby (2017). We plan to meet to discuss this further after I have completed my professional doctorate.

existing psychoanalytic theory, which at the time did not pay much attention to primary attachment relationships. It was introduced to help to explain the formation of interpersonal bonds, as patterns of attachment formed in early life could be repeated in later adult relationships.

Although Bowlby was not a group analyst, he became interested in the theory and practice of group analysis through conversations with group analysts Glenn and Marrone (Marrone, 1994, p.151). Thirty years ago Glenn (1987) drew attention to the parallel between the matrix of the group and the mother as perceived by S.H. Foulkes (1964, p.289) and the work by Winnicott (1971, p.10; 1986, p.63) and Bowlby (1979, p.109) on the 'good enough' mother and secure attachment respectively. If the base is not 'secure' the child will not go off on exploration which is seen as a pre-requisite for gaining maturity and independence. In a group, 'individual members learn new patterns of relating: they are "fellow explorers" upon a journey which extends beyond the frontier of group sessions so that new ways of perceiving eventually become possible in the world outside' (Glenn, 1987, p.112).

Both group analysis and attachment theory have a similar approach to the concept of transference, so that therapeutic settings offer an opportunity to use transference phenomena in 'a creative and healing way' (Glenn, p.113). Group members 'unconsciously take one another, the conductor and the group-as-a-whole as transference figures' (Marrone, 1994, pp.160-61). As they tell their stories, group members discover their vulnerability and can use one another and their group experience. Attachments form both to one another and to the group as they begin to repair their interpersonal relationships.

Although my participants were not in an overtly therapeutic setting, their attachment to a creativity group could help to explain the benefit which they gained regularly. While the language indicating attachment was clearer in the interviews with Participants B and C, it was implicit also in the interviews with A and D. It became clear during the interview that B's choir was a longstanding part of her life as a choir member. As her husband was also a member of the choir, she could keep the link through him at times when she felt unable to sing with them herself. It was her comment that *'it was just like slotting back in my place with these people I'd known for years'* which highlighted the importance of her attachment to the choir. Similarly, although Participant C had only been in her theatre group for two years at the time

of the interview, she indicated the need to attend even when she could not be involved in a particular performance.

Drawing on my practice and thinking about my own role as a group conductor, my professional role is to create a safe base to which the group members can be attached. My focus, especially at the beginning of a new group, is to create a safe environment in which people can work out difficult issues and find ways of changing habits which have been or become dysfunctional. Although I care about each group, I am more attached to the work as a group analyst than to any particular group. However, as part of my own repair and continuing professional development, I am attached to the larger group of the Oxford Psychotherapy Society and in particular, a sub-group, which has met monthly for many years and which reflects on the dialogue between religion and psychotherapy. This closed group of 12 members has experienced the death of two members since Christmas 2017. At a recent meeting before the funeral of the second member to have died of cancer, there was a heavy sense of grief. One of the group members who could not attend the funeral commented that she did not know the actual family but that for her this group was the family. She spoke for all of us and demonstrated that a group can become like a family to which we become deeply attached. I observed my own attachment to the group which I had helped to found, yet unlike Participant A, was not required to have a leadership role after its inception.

Participant B said that she was looking forward to being freer to enjoy her choir after her retirement due a few months after the interview. Her attachment to her choir was important as a means of resourcing her not only during ministry. It would continue to be important after her retirement, a time which can be particularly problematic for clergy as well as for their parishioners. It is recognised by the diocesan authorities that there is often a sense of bereavement when an Anglican incumbent leaves a parish. This is one of the reasons why there is usually an interregnum before the appointment of a successor. Although attachment is not named as the reason, it explains why clergy who retire are expected to move outside of the parish boundary, so that a new relationship can be established between the parishioners and the next incumbent. For the retiring clergy this can be experienced as quite harsh and it highlights the need for other interests, so that an attachment to a creative activity group can help to ease the transition from full-time stipendiary parish ministry to retirement elsewhere. B's clarity that she was looking forward to singing in her

choir's performances after retirement indicated that her attachment to her choir would help her to redefine herself as a person, when no longer in full-time ministry.

One of the problems with conducting time-limited groups, as distinct from ongoing groups to which particular members could enter and leave as appropriate, is that members' attachment to their groups is prescribed in advance. By contrast a creative activity group such as a choir or a theatre group does not usually have a fixed time limit, although there will be holiday breaks. My participants indicated the importance of the continuing role of their groups. This was clearly expressed by Participant B, as she mentioned her experience of not going to her choir and then returning to it later. She also anticipated being able to commit herself more fully to her choir and its performances after her retirement. During the period in which she was not an active member, the fact that her husband continued to belong to it meant that she was still likely to hear about it and support him in performances when possible. Her impending retirement gave a particular focus to the choir as an agent of continuity, as she could rely on it to be there after she had left her current parish and home and relocated elsewhere beyond the parish boundaries. This continuity of attachment gave her an alternative safe base which would help a major life change.

In psychotherapy, breaks are intentionally thought about as part of the dilution of the transference and a preparation for the ending of the work. Breaks can be both stressful and a relief from the intensity of the work. Breaks in the meetings of creative activity groups may also need to be thought about. Participant D highlighted the difficulty of practising his creative repair when the orchestra was having a break. This is different from what B was saying, and is similar to the role of breaks in therapeutic work. Although they can be difficult for some people, both in individual work and group work the fact that they are time-limited and the work is expected to continue after the break offers a sense of continuity. The presence of others was an important aspect of D's capacity to keep his playing going and his assumption was that this was a temporary situation during the holidays. His attachment to the orchestral group was indicated by the way in which he minded when it was not available. It may also have touched on the time when he was unable to play in any band or orchestra as a curate, a time which had prompted him not to let that experience be repeated. Although it has been written that 'creative apperception more than anything else makes the individual feel that life is worth living' (Winnicott, 1971, p.65), for D it was not enough to play the piano on his own during the orchestral breaks. He missed his musical companions.

For Participant A, there was a tension between his need to stop being in a teaching role and his wish for the photography group to continue after he had left it. He knew from experience that, without formal structures, his experience as a professional photographer would continue to be drawn on, understandably. His willingness both to *'pop along to the club'* and to accept occasional invitations to give a talk indicates that he successfully negotiated both needs. He also retained a looser attachment to the photography group. As he renewed his membership of his professional association, he reactivated his older attachment to his professional body.

All four participants had enjoyed their creative activity since before being ordained. Although there may have been interruptions in their experience of practising it regularly, in each case it was reclaimed as vital to their well-being. One participant was about to retire and the prospect of being able to take a fuller place in her choir's rehearsals and performances helped her to begin the process of letting go of her ministerial role. These potentially lifelong attachments to their creative activities resourced them and encouraged them to transfer their attachment from one particular group to another when appropriate.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the five themes which had been identified through my analysis of the data. Each one has been interpreted in the light both of the relevant literature and my clinical or personal experience. This discussion has highlighted the importance of unconscious dynamics in ministry and the way in which the participants' practice of their creative repair in groups helped to protect them from some of the potential hazards of leadership. The importance of significant beginnings in ministry has been identified through the participants' capacity to reflect on and learn from their experience. The findings have affirmed the importance of creative repair for the personal and professional well-being of the participants, when practised regularly and intentionally. The group aspect of their experience of creative repair has revealed the importance of the flexibility which a figure/ground understanding indicates can act as a protection from possibility of grandiosity. Finally, the particular value of being attached to their creative activity groups has offered a lifelong resource and sense of belonging which precedes ministry and extends beyond retirement. In the next chapter I shall return to my three initial concepts of creative repair, group, and rule of life and comment on the way in which the data relates to each of them in turn.

6 Conclusions: creative repair; the significance of participation in a group and the rule of life

Introduction

The five key themes which arose from the data and were interpreted in the previous chapter in the light of the literature and my practice are:

1. The impact on the participants of their role and sense of vocation.
2. The importance of creativity.
3. The importance of rhythm and self-discipline.
4. The participants' flexibility in a leadership role.
5. The participants' attachment to their creative activity groups.

In this chapter I return to my three original concepts of creative repair, group, and rule of life and comment on the way in which the data relates to each of them in turn. All three have been expanded by the evidence of the data. First, the concept creative repair was enriched by the elements of the participants' psychological health and the building up of their confidence. Their capacity to reflect on their experience enabled them to comment on this. Second, the concept of group has been enhanced in two ways: by the importance of the idea of figure/ground, a core idea in both group analysis and gestalt therapy; and by the value of the concept of attachment, as applied to a creative therapy group. Third, my research showed that examining clergy patterns of sustaining themselves through the interpretive lens of rule of life demonstrated the significance of four aspects of the participants' practice of creative repair in a group: the regularity and rhythm of their practice; their intentionality about setting regular times for their creative activity groups; the importance of beginnings at different points in their ministry and the need to establish sustainable rhythms; and their wish to follow the example of Jesus in living a balanced way of life. This broadened the theological concept of rule of life as applied to parish clergy ministry.

Creative repair

The concept of creative repair appeared both in my research question and in my original invitation to participants to take part in the research. Although it was not named in the questions for the semi-structured interviews, the participants were

therefore aware of it as an idea. This offered a conceptual context for their willingness to take part in the research. There were three main findings from the data which enhance or expand the concept of creative repair. These were first, the importance of creative repair to the participants' psychological health as part of their self-care; second, the importance of creative repair in building the participants' confidence, especially that of the two women so that there is a possible gender link; third, their capacity to reflect and a potential connection between that and theological reflection.

Psychological health and self-care

The practice of creative repair contributed to the psychological aspects of the participants' health, both personally and professionally. They were all clear that their engagement with their particular form of creative activity was an essential part of their self-care. Whether they were using their gifts or inhabiting an essential aspect of their identity, their time spent taking photographs, singing, acting or playing a musical instrument was essential to their everyday life. The therapeutic value of their particular art form was evident in comments such as '*refreshing*', keeping '*my well topped up*' or working out those times when '*you're having a bit of a desert*'. Their responses indicated that their creative repair was reliably and consistently beneficial to their personal and professional health.

Historically, the relationship between psychoanalytic thinking and the creative arts has been perceived variously. In early psychoanalysis, whereas Freud perceived art to be a form of sublimation, Klein and her followers saw it less as a form of self-expression and more as a part of a relationship between the self and its objects. Creativity was viewed as 'being motivated by the urge to repair the internal parental object, which has been damaged by a person's own aggression' (Levens, 2001, p.43). This Kleinian perspective is part of the inspiration for the concept *creative repair*. As explained in Chapter 2 (p.8), the idea combines the psychoanalytic idea of *repair*, in a here-and-now encounter, of the damage done to the psyche in formative relationships on the one hand (Klein, 1992, p.265; Sayers, 2000, pp.61-63) and the capacity of the *creative* arts to restore emotional and psychological energy on the other (Kramer, 2000). Applied to clergy, much of their emotional energy is involved in accompanying people who are going through painful and sometimes tragic events, offering 'pastoral solidarity, support and comfort in the midst of this most searing and heartfelt pain' (Percy, M. 2006, p.153). This energy has to be restored if

ministry is to be sustained and engagement with the creative arts is an important way of doing so.

The therapeutic disciplines which use specific creative forms as specialised disciplines – such as art therapy, music therapy and drama therapy – are outside the remit of this study, which explores a more ordinary expression of creative activities. However, these disciplines witness to the therapeutic value of engaging in them at all. Participant A's comment that his creative repair '*keeps me sane*' is an example of the restorative value of his photography, echoing art therapist Gerity's comment about the inner unity of process and art product 'with its miraculously integrating effects' (2000a, p.10). Although there was humour in Participant A's comment, as he had indicated that the background was a youthful experience of burnout, his sanity was protected in a sustainable way through creative repair. This was an example of the core capacity of creative repair to sustain him and his ministry.

The importance of creative repair for clergy psychological health and self-care was a core theme in my MA dissertation and was affirmed by the focus-group discussion which was written up in Stage 1, Paper 2 of the professional doctorate (Appendix B). The evidence of this study is that creative repair did enhance the confidence of the two female participants. At an individual level, the study also exemplifies what has been described as a 'restorative niche' in the report of an American study of the well-being of pastors conducted by social scientists. A 'restorative niche' is described as having two characteristics:

First it is something we can do well, something in which we can acquire and purs[u]e a sense of mastery. Second, a restorative niche is something we do out of intrinsic motivation: simply for the joy we experience from the activity itself. (Bloom et al., 2013, p.20)

Although the researchers' developing concept of 'restorative niche' embraces more activities than the creative arts, it includes them and resonates with the comments of all four of my participants about their creative activity, and especially with Participant A's feeling of excitement when he plans his weekly day off for enjoying his creative photography.

The four participants were all Anglican incumbents, so while my findings may have a more general resonance, my data is specifically relevant to the Church of England. The importance of clergy self-care is increasingly recognised both in Church of England policies and supporting literature. The last clause of the 2015 clergy guidelines reads:

The bishop and those exercising pastoral care of the clergy should both by word and example actively encourage the clergy to adopt a healthy life-style which should include adequate time for leisure, through taking days off and their full holidays, developing interests outside their main area of ministry, and maintaining a commitment to the care and development of themselves and their personal relationships. Helping clergy understand and overcome unrealistic expectations needs to be a priority. (Harrison and Innes, 2016, p.156)

The annual ministerial development review (MDR) is 'a legal obligation for ordained ministers holding tenure and a matter of good practice for other licensed clergy' (Walker, 2016, p.101). There is diocesan freedom to set up specific schemes and through my own role in conducting annual MDR meetings, I know that in one diocese at least there is a section asking whether clergy are supported in their ministry spiritually, personally and through time for recreation. Whitehead has indicated that the MDR was already being taken seriously in the Guildford Diocese before it became mandatory (2013, p.145). The evidence from this study confirms that creative repair is one important way in which clergy are refreshed and renewed and is central to their self-care.

My original thinking about creative repair focused on a way in which clergy could repair the energy used in sensitive pastoral care, and the participants in this study indicated that their practice of creative repair was central to their general well-being. The evidence that creative repair is generally beneficial to the participants could help in an assessment of the way in which clergy routinely resource themselves. Creative repair offers a way for clergy to resource themselves regularly in addition to the usual quiet days and retreats. As the participants saw this as congruent with their daily living out of their faith, this recognition would affirm their extra-parochial interests, seen as essential by Participant D, as part of their regular self-care.

Confidence and having a voice

The second finding from the data which enhances the concept of creative repair concerns the two female participants in particular. Participants B and C commented about the way in which their confidence was increased by their membership of their choir and theatre group respectively. Originally the concept of creative repair was considered in the context of the restoration of energy expended in pastoral care. As stated above, my original conception of creative repair was more focused on the restoration of energy expended in pastoral care and did not include at all the confidence which clergy had in themselves and their capacity to lead. The comments about an increase in confidence were part of the responses of Participants B and C to questions about the way in which their practice of creative repair helped them both personally and in their ministry. As B belonged to a choir and C to a theatre group, they each used their own singing voice or speaking voice when taking part in a performance. This suggested a growth in personal confidence through finding one's voice among others. As both these participants were women, although not statistically significant, this finding may be linked to the different ways in which women and men voice their concerns and develop their own thoughts and ideas.

In *Women's Ways of Knowing*, Belenky and her colleagues, concerned about the way in which their female students spoke frequently of problems and gaps in their learning, described 'how women struggle to claim the power of their own minds' (1986, p.3). Building on the work of Gilligan, who as noted in Chapter 5 had written about hearing 'a different voice' as women spoke about their personal moral crises and decisions, Belenky et al. noticed in their interviews with women that voice was a metaphor applicable to many aspects of women's experience and development. To have a voice meant not only speaking out, but believing that their contribution was valid and important, which was a matter of confidence.

In describing their lives, women commonly talked about voice and silence: 'speaking up', 'speaking out', 'being silenced', 'not being heard'... in an endless variety of connotations, all having to do with a sense of mind, self-worth, and feelings of isolation from or connection to others. We found that women repeatedly used the metaphor of voice to depict their intellectual and ethical development; and that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined. (Belenky et al., p.18)

When describing ways in which her singing was beneficial, Participant B spoke of the way in which her voice became '*scratchy*' when she was unable to sing in her choir. She meant this literally and I know from my own experience of having singing lessons that the older voice is particularly vulnerable to lack of practice. Metaphorically speaking, a '*scratchy*' voice is unable to sing or speak out whatever the person wants to communicate to others. Participant B also described a particular occasion on which she, as a short choir member, was expected to sing in the front row for a particular performance, rather than in her preferred place further back, saying that it gave her '*a huge boost*' to discover that she could '*sing out with confidence*'. She applied this confidence to her ministry role when it was her turn to sing the leading part in the sung liturgy. Singing in her choir was more than the need for regular practice in order to prevent her voice from being '*scratchy*'. It helped her to fulfil the liturgical aspect of her ministry role with greater confidence.

Participant C had joined her theatre group two years before the interview at the suggestion of her male work consultant, following the experience of being left by her husband. Although I cannot know whether or not a female work consultant could have been engaged to support her, it is possible that the insistence of her male consultant that she join a theatre group in order to resource herself was particularly helpful at a time of such vulnerability. Previously, she had found that her family life had been sufficient to resource her ministry, but needed more after becoming a single mother. The end of a relationship can also be an opportunity to build up self-esteem and confidence (Litvinoff, 1993, p.134). Although she did not use the word 'voice' in the same way as Participant B, Participant C did speak of the value of being able to '*play a different part... accessing parts of you that, as a mother and a priest, you don't get to demonstrate as easily*'.

In a fascinating study of the relationship between acting, spectating and the unconscious, Turri has recently offered a psychoanalytic perspective on unconscious processes of identification in the theatre, in which she suggests that the actor is receiving projections from the spectators. Drawing on Bion's theory of thinking, in which he distinguished between alpha-function, or thinking, and beta-elements, or 'thoughts without a thinker' (Symington and Symington, 1996, p.102) and the role of projective identification of the mother or analyst in helping the development of the baby's or patient's mind, Turri suggests that the actor, through the character being played, provides a similar opportunity for the spectator. Projective identification is the process by which:

the infant communicates his emotional state to his mother. Her ability to tolerate and process these feeling states, especially the frightening ones, enables the infant to take them back in a manageable form and also gradually to introject this capacity to process emotional experiences. (Symington and Symington, 1996, p.154)

The analyst offers a similar capacity to the patient, through interpreting the transference between them. Turri suggests that this trans-personal process also takes place in the theatre as:

the dynamic between sensibility and understanding in the art of the actor can... be construed as an alpha-function: her becoming the emotions of the character through her sensibility generates an act of understanding. Crucially, such understanding is directed at the character's emotions, not her own, according to a process which is known in theatre jargon as an 'interpretation'. (2017, p.100)

The actor is a conduit through which the emotional transaction takes place. Her or his work of interpretation is 'aimed at the impersonation of the character in front of an audience' (Turri, p.100).

This throws light on what can happen to clergy when presiding at the Eucharist. There they are *in persona Christi* and as such may receive projections from members of the congregation in the drama of the liturgy. This parallels the way in which actors receive projections, so it is interesting that Participant C sees her acting as giving her access to more of herself than ministry does. When she is being the vicar, whether presiding in the liturgy, or being a pastor in the parish, she is still living an actual vocation, from which she needs respite. By inhabiting the fictitious character which she is interpreting for the spectators, she has the opportunity to express a full range of emotions, thus giving herself a safe context for whatever might not be expressed in her public role. She welcomes the opportunity to act and use some gifts outside of ministry: '*I think that God has given you gifts and it is your responsibility to use them... you can't use them all in ministry.*' She also said that her theatre group had given her greater confidence in ministry after the difficulties that she had been through and it had helped her to recover from them. Commenting on the impact of this on her ministry, she believed that her parishioners benefited

from her having this outside interest as a protection from getting '*subsumed into parish stuff*', especially in a village.

Gilligan's work was directed towards a feminist ethic of care which is 'integral to the struggle to release democracy from the grip of patriarchy', by which she means 'those attitudes and values, moral codes and institutions, that separate men from men as well as from women and divide women into the good and the bad' (2011, p.177). It is only recently that women have been admitted both to the priesthood and the episcopacy of the Church of England. Patriarchal Christianity has been described as having damaged relationships between women and men (Bennett Moore, 2002, p.54) and this has impacted on pastoral care as 'Christian "values" based on Christian texts and Christian symbolism are behind much of the violence and suffering experienced by women' (p.54).

The female participants found that their weekly involvement with their creative activity groups allowed them to sing or speak out, which enhanced both their personal confidence and their confidence in their ministry roles. The two male participants, while modest in their manner, did not seem to struggle with lack of confidence in the same way as the two female participants. The evidence of a connection between creative repair and the growth of confidence, as indicated by the female participants, suggests that practising creative repair in a group can help people to find a voice. Both Participant B's experience of singing out in her choir's performance and Participant C's capacity to play the roles of a range of characters contributed to their growth in confidence both personally and in their ministry.

Part of this growth in confidence can be explained by the application of a core principle of group analysis. The use of the word 'conductor' for the group psychotherapist or facilitator is an intentional reference to a musical conductor. The founder of group analysis, S.H. Foulkes, said to a colleague: 'I feel like a conductor, but I don't know in the least what the music is which will be played' (Foulkes, E. 1990, p.292). The role is to bring out the voices of the group members in a non-dominant way. The main agent of change is the group itself rather than the group conductor. In an applied way, the members of a choir or theatre group are enabled to take their part in the performance of a particular production. There is also a fluidity of roles reminiscent of the gestalt idea of figure/ground, which will be further discussed within the concept of group (see below, p.109).

Reflection and theological reflection

It became clear that these participants had the capacity to reflect on their experience and that this acted as a conduit for their revelations about the value of their creative repair. Both Participants A and B used the word '*reflect*' in their responses to the interview questions. All four reflected on the difficult times when they had been unable to practise their creative repair in the past.

Clergy are encouraged to attend retreats and quiet days in order to deepen their spiritual life (Croft and Walton, 2005, p.25; Ison, 2005, p.17; Pedrick and Clutterbuck, 2005, p.105). My contribution to the practice of sustaining clergy well-being through group creative repair might be synergistically related to other forms of continuing ministerial development (CMD) and activity which sustains them. The existence of activities to develop reflection increases the value of the creative repair activities to them. This is an important contribution I can make to both thinking and practice.

In a recent book Williams has included self-knowledge as a central part of human inhabiting of the world fully, as:

this inhabiting of the world, this reconciliation between flesh and spirit involves... our self-knowledge, our art and our science, our labours for justice: because all of these are about the fully human inhabiting of our environment. (2017, p.24)

Although his inclusion of science and justice lie beyond the remit of this study, his emphasis on self-knowledge and art is relevant. Self-knowledge is important for learning to inhabit 'our own lives and our memories, to come to terms with, be at peace with ourselves' (p.25). Art is part of the joyful experience of inhabiting ourselves fully, so that my participants' capacity to reflect on the value of their creative activity groups falls within this theological framework of what it means to be human. It is also part of living a Gospel-based way of life, a theme to which I shall return later.

There is a difference between reflexivity and reflection. Reflexivity is 'finding strategies to question our own attitudes, theories-in-use, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions; to understand our complex roles in relation to others' (Bolton, 2014, p.7). To be reflexive 'involves thinking from within

experiences' (p.7). It was this to which Williams referred when considering self-knowledge to be a central part of human inhabiting the world.

Reflection is 'an in-depth view of events, either alone... or with critical support with a supervisor or group... it is to bring experiences into focus from as many angles as possible' (Bolton, 2014, p.7). Reflective practice is 'looking at everyday taken-for-granted, perceiving them as... unfamiliar and open to change' (p.8).

The capacity to reflect is assumed in the criteria for selection to ordained ministry in the Church of England. This seems to imply the capacity to be self-reflexive for Criterion D on personality and character begins: 'Candidates should display self-awareness and self-acceptance' (Church of England, 2014, p.6), and the evidence for this is to be found in their capacity to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses; identify ways in which their strengths and weaknesses may be used and ways in which the impact of their weaknesses may be limited. They should show appropriate self-acceptance and be reconciled to their own vulnerabilities and limitations; show that they are relaxed and at ease with themselves and be able to reflect on themselves with humour and a sense of perspective (Church of England, 2014, p.6). As part of their capacity to display potential for self-development and growth, candidates should have the capacity to 'reflect on the importance of having a breadth of interests other than church life, which help him/her to grow and develop' (Church of England, 2014, p.7). During training, ordinands are advised to think carefully about when they will need rest and recreation (Croft and Walton, 2005, p.88). If this is assumed in the process of selection and training, then it makes sense that such a 'breadth of interests' should be maintained during ministry itself.

In the pastoral aspect of their ministry, clergy accompany people in all aspects of their lives, especially during difficult times. The capacity to be self-reflexive involves connecting with one's own painful as well as pleasurable experiences. This can seem counter-cultural in a world in which people expect to be happy all the time. The expertise of clergy in staying with the sick and bereaved is therefore particularly relevant. They need to be able to discern when a person's deep sadness is appropriate and when it is pathological. They also need to be able to bear being present to the deep sadness of another. Their capacity to bear their own sadness will help them to avoid confusion between what belongs to them and what does not.

The capacity to distinguish between appropriate deep sadness and pathological sadness is not helped by some confusion within psychiatry. This can make appropriate referrals more difficult to identify. The psychiatrist Durà-Vilà has recently highlighted the danger in psychiatry's current tendency to see all deep sadness as pathological. In a recent study of the difference between depression as diagnosed in psychiatry and the spiritual experience of the Dark Night of the Soul, she has suggested recently that:

suffering does not seem to have a place in the modern Western world...
Depression and unhappiness are becoming more and more entangled, as many people feel entitled to be happy at all times no matter what is going on around them; when they fail to be happy, its absence is interpreted as evidence that something is medically wrong with them. (2016, p.276)

One of her aims is to help mental health professionals to redress this situation by giving more respect to the ordinary sadness which can be a consequence of life events, rather than including it in diagnosis of serious depression. One of her findings is that better training in mental health issues for clergy could improve their capacity to help those who approach them with issues of sadness. A growing interest in the importance of reflective skills in ministry would support this training. Within a ministry context, reflection has been described as 'giving something appropriate attention and consideration, looking at it from a variety of perspectives, being aware of the lenses we use and making a response' (Nash and Nash, 2009, p.3). In order for this to be effective, I suggest that it needs to extend to the capacity for reflexivity and clergy may need additional training for this.

The capacity to reflect on experience is an important component in both counselling and pastoral care. Self-reflection is the component which enables the listener to distinguish between what has been said by the other and what has been touched on within the listener's own experience. The process of reflecting on experience is central to the disciplines of counselling and psychotherapy, during sessions with clients, between sessions and in supervision (Etherington, 2004, p.28). Trained practitioners are expected to have been in appropriate therapy themselves in order to distinguish between the issues of the client and their own issues (McLeod, 1993, pp.209-10).

Applying this principle to pastoral care, Doebling suggests that empathy:

involves two simultaneous and opposite relational skills: (1) making connection with another person by experiencing what it is like to be that person, and (2) maintaining separation from the other person by being aware of one's own feelings and thoughts. (Doehring, 2006, p.18)

Being reflective involves 'learning from our experience' (Nash and Nash, 2009, p.17). Although clergy are not required to have experienced a professional clinical training in self-awareness and self-knowledge, they are required to be self-aware and to learn from their experience and from their 'own behaviour, including mistakes and errors of judgement' (Church of England, 2014, p.6). The role of my participants as incumbents would have included responsibility for pastoral care in their communities. Although the interview questions did not explore this area of their ministry, good pastoral care embraces the capacity to learn from past mistakes (Rose, 2013, p.8).

My participants demonstrated their capacity for self-reflection in their responses to the interview questions and it acted as a conduit for the data about the benefit to them of their creative activity. They indicated that their experience of not practising their creative activities had informed them of a deficit in their well-being and they had subsequently made sure that this did not happen in the future. In other words, they had learnt from their experience. The significance of this capacity to reflect on and learn from one's experience had not been part of the original concept of creative repair, but the data indicated that it was an essential conduit for the participants' communication about the importance of their creative activity to their well-being.

The capacity of the participants to reflect on their experience shows not only that they had met the criteria for selection but that they had not lost that capacity since being selected, trained and ordained. Recent literature indicates that being reflective is an important part of ministry (Nash and Nash, 2009; Percy, E. 2014, p.59). It may be that my participants were reflective individuals by nature, or it may be, at least in part, a consequence of theological reflection in ministry training (Thompson, Pattison and Thompson, 2008, p.6). Theological reflection has been described as 'a perennial feature of Christian tradition' (Graham, Walton and Ward, 2007, p.1). It is 'an activity that enables people of faith to give an account of the values and traditions that underpin their choices and convictions and deepens their understanding' (Graham, Walton and Ward, 2005, pp.5-6).

Despite the acknowledged 'lack of rigour' in training in theological reflection in adult education (Graham, Walton and Ward, 2007, p.1), all four of the participants had a genuine capacity to reflect on their own creative repair activities. Although their experience of being taught the skills of theological reflection was not part of this study, it is likely that they received such training as part of their initial ministerial education. In any case they all seemed at ease when reflecting on the God-given nature of their creative gifts. In addition they reflected on the connection between their practice of creative repair and their wish to follow the example of Jesus in taking time out of ministry. This would seem to exemplify, implicitly if not explicitly, the role of theological reflection in giving an account of a tradition which underpins their choices and enhances their understanding, as suggested by Graham, Walton and Ward (2005, pp.5-6). The connections which my participants made between their practice of creative repair and their wish to follow the example of Jesus in taking time out from active ministry suggest that the discipline of theological reflection is a useful way for clergy to learn to reflect on their experience and an important part of ministry training.

While the need to be self-aware and able to reflect on experience is taken for granted within the disciplines of psychotherapy and counselling, what the data has shown is that this capacity is a key factor in helping clergy to discern how they are resourced and thus identifying creative repair as an important part of the sustaining of their ministry. As Participant A put it, his early decision to give up photography was *'a bit of a mistake, because I was actually denying part of myself'*. Participant B began to question her decision not to go to her choir because *'I realised that I was missing it and it was actually doing me good, to be part of it'*. Their capacity to reflect theologically on their experience enabled them to respect the importance of their creative repair activities for the sustaining of their ministry.

Conclusions

This study has shown that my existing concept of creative repair (Holmes, A.C. 2009b) can be enhanced and expanded in the following ways: first, practising creative repair in a group was an essential part of self-care and a major contributor to the mental health of my participants; second, it contributed to growth in confidence for the female participants; third, the importance of clergy being able to reflect on their experience in order to benefit from their creative repair.

Group

In this piece of research I have been particularly interested to explore the role of the group in creative repair. This was a development from my earlier interests in other aspects of creative repair explored in Part 1 of the professional doctorate. As set out in Chapter 2, a group is being defined here as an intentional gathering of people 'coming together with a common aim, purpose or function' (Barnes, Ernst and Hyde, 1999, p.2). There were three main conceptual findings to do with groups which emerged from the data. These were: first, the therapeutic value of being in a group; second, the implicit presence of the figure/ground dynamic of both gestalt and group analysis which enabled the potential isolation in leadership to be overcome; and third, the role of an attachment to the creative activity groups, which facilitated a sense of belonging, itself an antidote to isolation.

The therapeutic value of being in a group

The therapeutic value of being in a group was evidenced by the data. There are different uses of the word 'therapeutic'. Used in a technical sense, group-analytic psychotherapy is a therapeutic method which has been described as 'a rewarding and effective form of group psychotherapy' (Roberts, 1991, p.3). A therapeutic method is a recognised professional way of treating those who seek help either for their psychological and emotional distress or for personal development needs. Used more broadly, experiences which enhance psychological and emotional health can be described as therapeutic.

Applied to other settings, people learn about themselves in a group. Although the participants were not engaged in therapy as such, their respective creativity groups were useful in the sense that they learnt about themselves through reflecting on their experience of being part of their groups. Given the importance of self-knowledge in the criteria of selection of Church of England clergy, this is one setting in which that capacity can be developed. It also allows them a regular, ordinary way of sustaining their psychological health and well-being.

Group analysts conduct groups in various settings in which the principles and practice of group analysis are applied to the particular setting involved. There are open groups, which have a fluid membership, and closed groups, in which new members are introduced mindfully and in discussion with existing group members. Beyond their use in technically therapeutic settings, both in the private and public

sector, groups are widely used in many organisational settings. There are observable successive stages in the life of groups popularly named as 'forming, storming, norming and performing' (Tuckman, 1965, p.396). However, those involved rarely consider the dynamics at work, which may explain why there are various formal or *ad hoc* groups which are 'liked by their members or regarded as a waste of time' (Handy, 1999, p.150).

In order for creative repair groups to be beneficial, leadership needs to be thoughtful and clear: Music therapist Ansdell suggests that 'the benefits of any group experience rely on ongoing cultivation and careful management' (2015, p.200). This comment could also apply to other groups, such as those to which the participants belonged. Their positive experience of their creative activity groups indicates that their shared task was clear, that the leadership was well enough conducted and that their particular creative activity group's life cycle had reached the effective or performative stage. Considering that three of the four groups in question were rehearsing for an actual performance in one of the creative arts, there was a double sense in which the performing stage of their groups' life cycle was facilitated by a shared goal. The combination of the group and creativity progressing towards a shared performance was particularly beneficial for Participants B, C and D. There was no suggestion in the data that any of the groups or their leadership was dysfunctional; therefore the implication was that each of their creative groups functioned well. This raises the question of whether creative repair only functions in a group if the group is functional, one which lies beyond the remit of this study but would be worthy of future exploration.

Figure/ground and a flexible mind-set

All of my participants were incumbents, particularly vulnerable to isolation due to their exposure as leaders, as the overall responsibility rests with them even if they have others in their ministry teams (Ison, 2005, pp.ix-x). A psychodynamic understanding of the dynamic between leaders and followers highlights the need for leaders not to be invested in their role for personal affirmation, or it can lead to grandiosity (Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002, p.69). The complexity and potential hiddenness of this process are shown by the fact that even the therapist (who understands this in theory) who becomes ordained is not always aware of what is going on in a ministry setting, as Runcorn has powerfully recorded:

Despite all his professional experience of 'transference' and group dynamics, he was quite unprepared for the sheer weight and power of projected hopes and expectations that he now experienced in his new role in the community. (2005, p.25)

My participants indicated their awareness of the weight of their role as incumbent and the consequent need for respite from the pressures of leadership. The criteria for selection include the need for flexibility of mind (Church of England, 2014, p.15). Although the context for this is the capacity to be receptive to different intellectual perspectives, it could usefully be applied to the need to oscillate between leadership and membership roles in the practice of ministry. If so, then there would perhaps need to be a critical conversation between those theologies of ministry which emphasise the permanent nature of priesthood or charismatically anointed leadership, thus exacerbating the danger of grandiosity and the need for genuine flexibility in ministry practice. While such a discussion is outside the boundaries of this study, the value of flexibility is indicated by the data.

A relevant model for a flexible mind-set is to be found in the gestalt idea of figure/ground (see Chapter 2, pp.14-15). The idea of figure/ground common both to group analysis and gestalt therapy helps to explain the need of the participants to be members of their creative activity groups. '[F]igures of interest emerge from and recede into an undifferentiated ground, like the relationship between wave and water' (Taylor, 2014, p.42). Applied to my participants and other leaders, by belonging to their creative activity groups, they had respite from being the 'figure' as ministry leaders by being members or part of the 'ground' of their group, in which someone else was leading.

As indicated in Chapter 2 (p.14), the founder of group analysis, Foulkes, favoured the word 'conductor' or the group therapist or facilitator, as a metaphor for his or her role in helping each of the group members to find their voice in the group. In a Foulkesian group-analytic group, whether it is an actual therapy group or an applied group conducted on group-analytic principles, the focus moves fluidly between group members including the conductor. She or he sometimes responds to the 'figure' of the particular person speaking or the 'ground' of what is happening in the group-as-a-whole. This involves a flexibility of mind and the capacity to move between the roles of group member and conductor, enabling a 'fluctuating location of authority between conductor and orchestra (Behr and Hearst, 2005, p.7). As part

of continuing professional development, group analysts are encouraged to attend study days which include a group experience in which a colleague is in the role of conductor. This reinforces their experience of being in a membership role, so that they model the capacity to move between being the figure and being part of the ground.

Incumbents are routinely in a leadership role. 'To be the spiritual leader is to be a powerfully symbolic figure in the community' (Runcorn, 2005, p.25). It is easy for clergy to become dependent on the affirmation which comes from such a role and therefore vulnerable to an unrealistic and unhealthy view of themselves. They can also become very isolated in their leadership role. If they are able to move in and out of leadership/membership roles they are less dependent on being the one in charge, in receipt of all the negative or idealised projections sustained by leaders (Rose, 2013, p.30) and more likely to sustain their ministry. Although the participants were not, to my knowledge, aware of the principles of group analysis or gestalt therapy, their membership of their respective creativity groups indicated and helped them to develop an implicit flexibility of mind. For example, as a former professional photographer, Participant A decided to leave the local photography group and move to another group *'because I want to receive rather than give... I was in teaching mode all the time... I wanted to move to learning something myself'*. He was not personally invested in a leadership role *per se*. The fact that all the participants demonstrated their capacity to be flexible between roles and associated their time off with membership rather than leadership indicates that they were potentially protected from some of the danger of grandiosity caused by the dual roles of clergy and highlighted by Watts, Nye and Savage (2002, p.69).

It is not necessary to understand the theory of group analysis in order to benefit from the practice of being in a group. For example, many counsellors and psychotherapists will have experience of being in a sensitivity group during their clinical training, but few will be familiar with the group-analytic theory lying behind their experience. The experience of being a member of a group of fellow trainees helps their growing self-knowledge and complements the individual experience of therapy usually required by such training. As they are also learning the role of counsellor, the group offers them an opportunity to receive from other group members as well as the group conductor while they are getting used to the responsibility of the role of therapist. They regularly move between roles of figure and ground.

In a parallel way, a key benefit for the participants of their experience of their creative repair groups was the opportunity to be in a membership rather than a leadership role. This resourced their ministry as well as resourcing them personally. For example, Participant B experienced being part of the ground, when singing confidently in her choir, which supported her role as the figure, when singing the leading role in the liturgy. Participant D was able to move flexibly between his usual role as part of the ground of the brass and woodwind sections and his occasional role as a soloist or figure in his orchestra.

The experience of being sometimes the figure and sometimes the ground in their respective creative activity groups helped the participants in the study to have respite from the projections and demands of leadership and meant that they implicitly practised the flexibility of figure/ground. Given the danger of grandiosity for those who are leaders in ministry settings (Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002, p.69), this regular group experience acts as a prophylactic against an occupational hazard. In addition it protects them from the possibility of burnout from over-responsibility and the refusal or inability to get into a different mode. Their regular experience of being fed rather than feeding others consolidates a sense of reciprocity in ministry, itself a protection against grandiosity. This key finding was possible due to the participants' attachment to their respective groups, itself a second key finding from the data, to which I now turn.

Attachment to a group

The participants indicated that they were attached to their creative activity groups. After a gap in her membership of her choir, when she re-joined it, Participant B said that *'it was just like slotting back in my place with these people I'd known for years'*. This is important both in terms of the importance of belonging to a group outside of the ministry setting and because attachment to a particular creative activity group was a key part of creative repair in a group. Two theoretical traditions contribute to an understanding of this. These are first, attachment theory and, second, an understanding of a hierarchy of needs.

Attachment theory, as articulated originally by Bowlby, suggests that from childhood we all need a secure base from which to develop:

In a given child the complex of behavioural systems mediating attachment comes into being because in the ordinary family environment in which the

vast majority of children are raised these systems grow and develop in a comparatively stable way. (1969, p.265)

Since Bowlby developed his thinking, attachment theory has grown and developed and become a therapeutic modality in its own right (Holmes, J. 2001). While there has been some interest in attachment theory among some group analysts, it has not been part of core group-analytic theory. It is theory-in-progress as there are some group analysts, notably Glenn (1987), Marrone (1994, 2014) and Esquerro (2017), who have applied attachment theory to the practice of group analysis. Attachment to a group can be important for survival, 'particularly at times when people are pressed into a collaborative and egalitarian struggle against a common enemy' (Esquerro, 2017, p.93). When clergy are going through difficult times, either in their parish or more widely feeling that they are working against a tide of secularism, their attachment to their creative activity groups could support their survival and sense of integrity.

Sometimes peer-group attachments established at an early age can be fundamental to children's survival in the absence of individual attachments (Esquerro, 2017, p. 108). Secondary attachments to siblings, peers and groups can contribute substantially to a child's development and can mitigate problems in primary attachment figures. Applied to the adult, an attachment to a peer group in training can offer an alternative safe base from which to explore new ways of relating to others while learning a new discipline. The group can dilute the sense of isolation which individuals can feel when developing in new directions. As an example, during a Foundation Course in Group Analysis, a colleague observed that when the visiting seminar leader asked the students to form two groups according to their professional interests, consciously or unconsciously, they formed exactly the same groups which met later for their experiential group. This was only recognised in the staff feedback session afterwards. While it could have been a genuine coinciding with their professional interests, it was more likely to have been a need to stay in a safe zone while learning new ideas.

Clergy in role find that 'personal friendship and intimacy are rarely achieved' (Peyton and Gatrell, 2013, p.129) partly due to the need to maintain professional boundaries within their parish. Curates have been advised:

Everyone has friends who inspire, friends to have a good time with, and friends who drain. When time to socialize is at a premium, spend that time with people you really want to be with. (Pedrick and Clutterbuck, 2005, p.126)

The evidence of the data indicated the importance of shared interests with others in their creative activity groups. Clergy may become very attached to their parishes, which can make it difficult when they have to leave them. It is important that they have groups outside of their ministry settings to which they can attach reliably over time. Participant B's attachment to her choir pre-dated her post at the time of the interview and was central to her capacity to let go of her parish as she approached retirement. She actively looked forward to being able to sing more often in the choir's performances as well as rehearsals, when she had more freedom in retirement. Participant D would advise a new ordinand to have an outside interest beyond family and friends, a weekly activity to ensure some refreshment and recuperation time. It was clear that he valued the weekly rehearsals with a '*shared experience of making music with other people*' and he missed it during vacations.

This need to be with others is partly explained by another theoretical tradition, which was initiated by Maslow, who outlined his recognition of a hierarchy of needs in the 1950s. Once the basic physiological needs of food, water and shelter and the physical need of safety have been met, 'there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs' (1954, p.89). Not only will the person feel the absence of close relatives and friends, but 'will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in his [*sic*] group and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal' (p.89).

Groups, both formal and informal, meet human needs for affiliation and self-esteem. They provide individuals with a sense of security, they reduce anxiety and the sense of powerlessness and they provide opportunities for individuals to test reality through discussion with others. (Stacey, 2003, p.69)

The need for clergy to belong to a group outside of the parish in which they serve is highlighted by their potential isolation. 'The networks clergy belong to will vary, but the principle of taking time for friendships, fellowship and support is important' (Lawson, 2005, p.45), especially as many incumbents work alone.

Conclusions

The concept of group as experienced by the participants in their creative activity groups was expanded in three ways. First, their groups were experienced as therapeutic in the broad sense that they enhanced their psychological and emotional health. Second, the implicit way in which participants experienced flexibility through alternating between ministry leadership and membership of their creative activity groups was a living out of the figure/ground concept used in both group analysis and gestalt thinking in an applied way as a prophylactic to the dangers of grandiosity. Third, the participants' attachment to their groups affirmed the value of bringing together groups and attachment theory, a growing idea within the practice of group analysis. Taken together with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and the need to belong, the concept of group has been extended beyond the original conceptual framework.

Rule of life

The third concept on which I drew for the purposes of this research was that of rule of life. Drawn from the monastic tradition, the idea of a rule of life applied outside the religious orders offers an overall structure for daily life. The key elements which I identified in Chapter 2 and presented as sub-concepts are *well-being*, *balance* and *time wisdom*. Well-being includes relationship with others. Balance involves a balance between the active and contemplative aspects of ministry. Cherry's concept of time wisdom (2012) involves the capacity to live both in *chronos* or measured time and *kairos* or eternal time. This involves the recognition of one's own experience of time.

Looking through the rule of life lens at the clergy participants' patterns of sustaining themselves and their ministry revealed four issues. The participants practised their creative repair regularly; they were intentional about their practice, protecting it in their diaries; it was important to set these rhythms at significant beginnings in their ministry; they were conscious about imitating the patterns of Jesus. Although only one of the participants was committed to a particular tertiary monastic rule of life, all four were living out their Christian vocation and their practice of creative repair in a regular, intentional and disciplined way, as if living out a rule of life.

The idea of living according to a Christian rule of life owes its inspiration to the monastic tradition and many religious houses have oblates or associates attached to them. Unlike the Franciscan Third Order, which is an order in its own right, founded

by St Francis, other oblates or associates are attached to a particular foundation as a symbol of stability. My focus in this study is the Anglican tradition, but there are equivalent practices in other denominations, such as the Methodist Diaconal Order whose rule of life 'is a means by which we might be liberated to find a sense of wholeness in the rhythm of life' (Methodist Church, 2017, p.749). The word 'liberated' echoes Participant A's reflection that his rule of life supported his creative repair on his day off, thanks to: *'the wonders of having a Rule of Life because if you have a Rule you have to do it'*. Finding a 'sense of wholeness in the rhythm of life' implies more than prayer, work and study and embraces particular gifts as well as regular time off. Members of the Methodist Diaconal Order endeavour to 'acknowledge and enjoy God's gifts to us of time, talents, money and possessions and through God's grace to be able stewards of these, order the rhythm of each day, month and year, to allow for study and relaxation, weekly day off, regular holiday' (Methodist Church, 2017, p.750). In other words, living by a rule of life undergirds that 'disciplined life balance between work, rest and holy play' which is 'a feature of many monastic rules' (Collicutt, 2015, p.142).

Not all of those who live according to a rule of life are attached to a formal order. Increasingly, those wishing to deepen their spiritual lives draw up a personal rule, as 'a means whereby, under God, we take responsibility for the pattern of our spiritual lives' (Miller, 1984, p.5). Miller believes that it 'is crucially important for many Christians (perhaps especially Christian leaders) to include times of refreshment and relaxation – times to participate in the ordinary things of life, from which the busyness of their occupation may keep them' (p. 17). Creative repair is a central aspect of participants' time of refreshment and relaxation, as evidenced by comments such as *'refreshing'*, and keeping *'my well topped up'*. A rule of life which includes times of refreshment and relaxation is a protection from over-active ministry and supports a balanced way of life.

Regularity and intentionality

One of the hallmarks of a rule of life is the 'disciplined life balance between work, rest and holy play' to which Collicutt refers. Creative repair is one way of taking part in 'holy play'. This part of the 'disciplined life balance' implies a rhythm or regularity in the practice of creative repair. The participants indicated that they put the weekly choir practice, orchestral, band or theatre rehearsal in the diary and protected it from other meetings unless, as for Participant B, there was a direct clash with an annual civic obligation.

Farrington addresses the challenge of maintaining a rule after the initial enthusiasm has worn off: 'Faithfulness to God is a long-term commitment, and only later, after much practice and attentiveness to your rule, will you be able to see where you have been and where you might be going' (2000, p.27). This potential tension between regularity and boredom is implied in her advice on drawing up a rule of life: 'When you are constructing your rule, pay attention to the kinds of variety that you can build into it' (p. 27). She goes on to give examples of different types of physical exercise or reading a wide variety of books. Applying this to my participants' practice of creative repair, Participants B, C and D were all taking part in regular practices or rehearsals leading to particular performances of music or theatre which would embrace variety routinely. Participant A varied either the locations for his photography or the exhibitions which he visited on his days off. The regularity of their creative activity was a weekly prophylactic against the potential emotional fatigue of full-time ministry.

The intentionality of the participants' commitment to their creative activity groups was evidenced by their reference to the need to put the rehearsals or days off in their diaries in order to protect them from other meetings or events which might in the past have taken priority. The sense of obligation to honour their commitment, whether it was to the other members of their groups or to their acknowledged need to keep their personal '*well topped up*', allowed the discipline of their way of life to override any irregularity of mood or inclination. As all four participants had looked back on their earlier experience of being unable or unwilling to resource themselves through the exercise of their creative gifts, their intentional protection of their times for creative repair was a product of that experience. The data indicated that these earlier experiences had coincided with various beginnings in their ministry. As a result this suggested the importance of establishing useful habits when in formation or when beginning a new phase of their ministry, a point to which I now turn.

Beginnings and the establishment of sustainable habits

The importance of beginnings became clear in the data as a learned experience for the participants. Whether it was an initial curacy or the beginning of a particular post, or the original calling to ministry, they had discovered that they suffered if they were unable to practise their creative repair. Whether it was the unavailability of a band or orchestra, as for Participant D, the decision not to attend a choir on the evening of a day which was not her day off, as for Participant B, or the initial calling to ministry, as for Participant A, each either changed their mind or resolved not to let it happen

again. The retrospective wisdom of the participants indicated that a different approach to these beginning points would have encouraged them to set up habits of practising their creative repair which could have resourced them routinely in their ministry.

Beginnings are very significant, as they can stir up feelings which can be unpredictable and overwhelming and therefore distort our thinking. The discipline of infant observation and the work of the psychoanalyst Winnicott testify to a belief in the importance of beginnings. As I indicated in Chapter 5 (pp.71-72), Winnicott (1964) affirmed the need for the mother to be neither over-attentive nor inattentive in the developing relationship between herself and her baby, thus allowing the baby to trust her as 'good-enough'. Whatever the outcome of this primary relationship, as Bowlby (1979) has indicated, the baby will attach to whatever she or he is exposed to. A good-enough experience of being accompanied by parents and significant others acts as a foundational resource for future transitions.

This link between our childhood template and important new beginnings later in life suggests the need to set habits for creative repair in initial ministerial education (Holmes, A. 2015). The evidence from my data supports the need to be intentional about practising creative repair, ideally during the process of formation, in order to support the sustainability of ministry. As incumbents, each of my participants referred either to students on placement with them, curates training with them or ordinands to whom they would give advice. Participant B referred to a time when she '*got very stressed*', which coincided with having two curates, one female and one male, in her care. Given the impact of beginnings and the need to give curates on-the-job training, it is possible that the projections into her of two curates negotiating beginnings overloaded her capacity to bear the unconscious dynamics involved. An understanding of the importance of beginnings and encouragement to regular creative repair during her formation may have helped her to manage this time, although it does raise questions about the wisdom of diocesan leaders expecting incumbents to nurture more than one curate at a time.

Imitating the patterns of Jesus

The participants drew explicitly on the example of Jesus in withdrawing from his active ministry of teaching and healing in order to spend time alone with God or with a few disciples. Jesus modelled a 'balance between withdrawal, which offers... the opportunity for detached consideration of events, and a passionate engagement

with them' (Collicutt, 2015, p.144). This balance between active and contemplative ministry is central to the monastic tradition. It is a factor in various approaches to establishing a rule of life in order to 'create a balanced life so that we have time for our relationship with God' (Farrington, 2000, p.3). The participants were aware of this need for a balance between active and contemplative life. It was part of their general spiritual renewal and included individual times of walking or riding or studying as well as regular quiet retreat days and their membership of their creative repair groups.

The inspiration of Jesus in modelling a way of life for all his followers, both those whom he called during his ministry on earth and those who have followed him during the intervening two thousand plus years is central to Christian practice. Reflecting on the meaning of theology, Williams sees it as 'a discipline that traces the process of how the world comes to be inhabited' (2017, p.23). God already inhabits the world 'in the wisdom, the beauty, the order, the alluring wonder that surrounds us in our material environment' (p. 23). He adds that:

The pivotal moment in the unfolding narrative is when God fully and unequivocally inhabits the human life which is Jesus of Nazareth, the death and resurrection that belongs to Jesus of Nazareth, and so makes the unprecedented difference to your body and mine, which we call grace and adoption and the life of the Body of Christ, the difference that changes our own inhabiting of the world. (p. 24)

This sense of inhabiting the world is one which embraces art in its widest meaning as:

a world without art would be a world in which flesh sat on its depressing own, without any passion to discover how the environment is lived in by God's glory and is reflected in word and in image. (p. 24)

By regularly balancing their active and contemplative lives after the example of Jesus, the participants modelled the need to withdraw into their own way of expressing their art with others. This disciplined way of life protected their capacity to sustain their ministry in a rhythmic and reliable way.

The wish to follow the example of Jesus also gave the participants a profound sense of meaning and purpose to the structure of their lives including their practice of creative repair. According to MacIntyre, practices ‘never have a goal or goals fixed for all time – painting has no such goal nor has physics – but the goals themselves are transmuted by the history of the activity’ (2011, p.225). Putting together the personal history of the participants in their practice of creative repair and their intentional wish to follow the example of Jesus, by engaging regularly in their creative repair, the goal of living a faithful Christian life is enhanced by their living out the balance of active and contemplative ministry in a structured way.

Conclusions

The concept of a rule of life has been enhanced by the data in four ways. First, regularity and rhythm sustained in the practice of creative repair indicated that it was part of the structure of the participants’ lives and could be integrated into a rule of life as applied to parish clergy. Second, the intentionality of the participants’ protection of their time for their creativity groups committed them to a balance between their active and restorative time. Along with other ways of taking time out of their active ministry, it ensured an ongoing experience of time with others in a creative context, as an example of ‘holy play’. Third, the fact that all of the participants had missed out on their creative repair at significant beginnings in their ministry highlighted the need to attend to the importance of beginnings and the need to establish a viable template for future ministry. Fourth, the commitment of the participants to following the example of Jesus in taking time out of active ministry showed that they knew why they wanted to balance various aspects of their lives in a sustainable way. It also gave them an overall purpose to their practice of creative repair.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that my initial three concepts of creative repair, group, and a rule of life have been expanded and enriched by the data. First: creative repair in a group was both an essential element of self-care and contributed to the psychological health of my participants; the confidence of the female participants was enhanced; in order for the clergy to benefit from their creative repair, it was important for them to be able to reflect on their experience.

Second: the groups were experienced as therapeutic in the broad sense of resourcing the participants psychologically and emotionally; the implicit figure/ground flexibility between leadership in ministry and membership of their groups gave them some protection from the dangers of grandiosity; their attachment to their creativity groups indicated the value of linking groups and attachment theory; with the addition of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the importance of a sense of belonging the initial concept of group has been expanded.

Third: the concept of a rule of life has been expanded by being applied to parish clergy as indicated by the regularity and rhythm of creative repair; intentionally protected time with others spent in 'holy play' ensured a balance between active ministry and restorative creativity; the need to establish sustainable habits in ministerial formation has introduced the importance of beginnings when establishing a personal rule of life; mindfully following the example of Jesus in seeking respite from active ministry added a sense of purpose to the practice of creative repair.

While this was a small study within one diocese of one ecclesiastical denomination, it contributes to the larger discussion of the role of clergy and the need for them to find a way of life which is sustainable. In the next chapter I consider the impact of these findings on the professional practice to which this study seeks to make a contribution.

7 Impact of findings on practice and dissemination of findings

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the professional practice to which my research is making a contribution. This includes ways in which my findings have already influenced my own current practice and ways in which they might influence future practice more widely. This is followed by suggested ways in which my findings will be disseminated.

The professional practice to which I am contributing

The professional practice to which I am contributing is broadly conceived. First, it is addressed to clergy themselves who have a responsibility to sustain their psychological health and would benefit from taking this research seriously. Second, it is addressed to those who support clergy, including spiritual directors, mentors, pastoral supervisors, counsellors and psychotherapists. Third, those involved in forming and training clergy would benefit from the findings, especially about the need to establish sustainable habits at the beginning of ministry.

Greater understanding of the unconscious dynamics experienced in ministry is needed if clergy are to think coherently about how to manage the temptation to be *'all things to all people'*, as Participant D put it, and avoid the dangers of grandiosity. Informed by my group-analytic and psychodynamic background, this study adds to recent literature addressed variously to pastoral carers and those in Christian formation (Rose, 2013; Collicutt, 2015) and to those training to be psychodynamic practitioners (Clark, 2012). Rose's handbook on psychology for pastoral contexts (2012) explains psychodynamic concepts and offers insight and guidelines in relation to mental health to those practising pastoral care. In addition, Collicutt's comprehensive guide to the psychology of Christian formation (2015), while primarily addressed to Christians, especially those training in ministry, is also a resource for mentors, supervisors, spiritual directors and those counsellors and psychotherapists who routinely work with clergy in their practice. Clark's monograph (2012) is addressed specifically to those training to be psychodynamic practitioners, whose training rarely includes a module on religion and spirituality. A Jungian analyst, she seeks to broaden the training of psychodynamic counsellors to address this missing dimension. Evidence that there is a growing recognition of the

importance of thinking about faith in the consulting room is to be found in a recent article addressed to a division of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (Ross, 2018).

This study does not contradict the existing literature but expands it. Anchored in a group-analytic and psychodynamic perspective, my discussion of the findings affirms the importance for clergy of practising creative repair in a group. The interpretation of the factual findings in Chapter 5 offers psychodynamic explanations of the importance of creative repair for clergy. The group-analytic understanding of the figure/ground movement between clergy being in a leadership role and being a member of a choir or theatre group is a new perspective on the practice of ministry. The application of attachment theory to the participants' belonging to their creative activity groups explains how the need for extra-parochial groups to which to belong can sustain ministry.

The findings of this study affirm the importance of what Collicutt has called 'holy play' (2015, p.142). In summary, the benefits of creative repair in a group include enhanced clergy self-care and psychological health. It can also enhance the confidence of female clergy in their own voice. The group aspect of their creative repair is an antidote to the hazards of leadership such as grandiosity and isolation. Clergy and those working to support them would benefit from knowing that the habits of theological reflection learnt in training are helpful in their ongoing reflection on their own well-being. Knowing that their vocational wish to follow the example of Jesus supports the need to balance active and contemplative ministry, clergy and those working with them might discover that the practice of creative repair can be part of a personal rule of life. All of these findings might inform the future practice of both clergy and those who support them.

The impact of the findings on my own practice

Since conducting my research, I have reflected on my participants' experience of negative projections in their ministry which was one of the drivers to their practice of creative repair. This has reinforced my commitment to practising my own creative repair, as part of my role is routinely to receive negative projections. One of the many things which I have had to set aside in order to complete this doctorate is my active membership of a reading group which meets to discuss literature and some

films from a psychoanalytic perspective. It is my intention to re-join this as soon as possible.

Within my own informal support from clergy and clinical colleagues, some have not only been praying for me as I have progressed through the research programme, but have also enjoyed telling me about their own practice of creative repair. Many of my colleagues sing in choirs or attend poetry groups or other creative activity groups. As a result of my research findings, I have been more intentional about encouraging them in this. Whereas my original ideas about creative repair were partly informed by knowing that many psychoanalysts were interested in the creative arts, despite the availability of study days and other opportunities for cross-disciplinary thinking, many therapists have themselves become caught up in the *zeitgeist* of busyness and NHS targets, and have welcomed my research interest as relevant to them too.

The experience as a researcher of conducting the four interviews has had a profound influence on my work as a practitioner. My participants had responded voluntarily to my letter of invitation, which had been sent out by the bishop of the diocese with a clear statement that he supported the research, but would not be involved in it at all beyond being the gate-keeper who enabled me to find participants. They knew from the letter that I was an ordained Anglican researcher with permission to officiate in the diocese and I believe that it helped to create a sense of safety for the interviews. They each seemed concerned to want to help to improve the sustainability of ministry. This served to focus my attention on the creative repair of my clergy clients and spiritual directees. It has also affirmed the importance of that section of the clergy ministerial development review forms which enquires about the minister's support and time for recreation.

During the course of my research I have become more intentional about inviting my clients to reflect on what resources and what drains them, when it is appropriate to do so. They are often surprised by what they discover. Sometimes they mention some creative pursuit which used to be important to them, but which has been pushed out by the pressures of everyday life. One example was a woman whose relationship breakdown had meant that she was trying to bring up two children as a single parent. In addition to thinking about ways in which she could manage the difficult encounters with the children's father, we identified a suppressed wish to create a studio and develop her wish to paint. An unintended benefit of her partner's

departure was her freedom to claim a space in which she could do this. Following this through and beginning to paint increased her self-confidence until she could continue the therapy via the art. Although I have been interested in the therapeutic value of the creative arts for many years, the findings of my research have affirmed what was a tentative interest and have given me more confidence in exploring this area when it occurs naturally in the process.

In my work with couples I have been influenced by the way in which three of my research participants spoke of their partners' support of their creative repair activities. As a result I have been more intentional about the way in which the couples in my practice support each other's recreational needs.

One consequence of my finding out about the importance of my participants' attachment to their groups is that I have thought again about how I facilitate one-off clergy training sessions in which there is no opportunity to follow up any experiences in the group. I have not yet had the opportunity to put this into practice but I shall be more inclined to invite them to identify other groups to which they are attached and highlight the value of belonging to a group outside of their parish which offers some continuity over their years of ministry in different places. This will be easier once my findings have been disseminated.

Ways in which my findings might influence future practice

The particular contribution which my research seeks to make is to affirm the way in which creative repair, especially when practised with others, helps clergy to sustain their ministry. Knowing about the findings of this study would increase ways of sustaining ministry for clergy themselves, spiritual directors, mentors, pastoral supervisors and those involved in clergy formation and continuing ministerial development. In addition, those counsellors and psychotherapists who work with clergy or ordinands do not currently have specific training to work with them, so that my findings, when published, might offer a contribution to their continuing professional development. I shall consider the impact of the findings under the heading of each of my main concepts.

Creative repair

The evidence that creative repair is beneficial to my participants suggests that those practitioners who work with clergy as supervisors, spiritual directors, counsellors or

psychotherapists might usefully engage them in an informal assessment of the way in which they routinely resource themselves.⁵ In addition to the usual quiet days and retreats which resource clergy in an overtly spiritual way, their engagement with some aspect of the creative arts could complement this. As my participants saw this as congruent with their daily living out of their faith, this recognition would affirm their extra-parochial interests, seen as essential by Participant D, as part of their regular self-care.

As my participants demonstrated their capacity for self-reflection, an understanding of that aspect of clergy training which teaches and encourages theological reflection would be useful for those practitioners who see clergy and ordinands. Although some capacity for self-reflection is necessary for clients to benefit from any counselling, an awareness of this part of clergy training would be a useful resource for my colleagues who work with clergy.

The evidence of a connection between creative repair and the growth of confidence, as indicated by my female participants, would help colleagues to discern the particular needs of some female clergy. As the findings of the research are disseminated, the reporting of the benefits of practising creative repair in a group might encourage other practitioners to help both female and male clergy to find their own voice within an institution which has followed the Judaeo-Christian biblical model of patriarchy for many centuries (Isherwood and McEwan, 2001, p.50). At the extreme end of what can go wrong, in my practice I have seen both female clergy and clergy spouses who have suffered from bullying by male clergy. Although this was not something named by either of my two female participants, their affirmation of the importance of finding their voice through their creative activity groups points to the need for my colleagues to be alert to the patriarchal history of Christianity and the hidden assumptions arising from that history.

Group

The beneficial effect of belonging to a group experienced by my participants was due partly to the value of belonging to a group outside of their parish, partly to the

⁵ Such an assessment might include the following: first, whether the clergy person draws on any form of creative activity as a resource or any means of practising creative repair; second, whether s/he has any history of training in self-reflection; third, whether s/he has an issue about finding her (or his) voice and whether any form of creative activity group helps in this.

clarity of their shared task, partly to the competence of the leadership and partly to the development of their task towards some sort of performance. Both clergy themselves and those working with clergy should be aware of the value of a regular opportunity for them to experience a group outside of their parish setting.

Most counsellors and psychotherapists will have had experience of being in a group during their clinical training, but few will be familiar with the theory behind group analysis. Other practitioners who support clergy in formation or through pastoral supervision or spiritual direction may have a limited understanding of the way in which groups function and in particular a lack of understanding of the gestalt concept of figure and ground. A key benefit for my participants of their experience of their creative repair groups was the opportunity to be in a membership rather than a leadership role. This helped them to have respite from the projections and demands of leadership and meant that they implicitly practised the flexibility of figure/ground. Both clergy and those supporting clergy should be aware of the danger of grandiosity for those who are upfront leaders in ministry settings (Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002, p.69). This study has indicated the value of belonging to a group in order to avoid this. While the research explored creative activity groups in particular, other groups such as cell groups, reading groups, walking groups or team sports would also act as a prophylactic against the occupational hazard of grandiosity.

Church of England clergy are not required to be in supervision for their pastoral work. Were it to be mandatory, supervision, whether one-to-one or in a group, would offer an importantly different space in which clergy might review their work and think about the transferences and projections involved in pastoral relationships. Those who support clergy are more likely to be in supervision for their own work. For counsellors and psychotherapists it is a requirement and a crucial part of their accountability as practitioners. This study might help practitioners to reflect on their own experience of moving between the roles of therapist and supervisee. Recognition of the value of this figure/ground flexibility would enhance the understanding of those who support clergy and alert them to the need for the clergy in their care to be intentional about moving between different roles and having less investment in being the one in charge.

The power of my participants' attachment to their creative activity groups was also evidenced by my data. This was especially useful in protecting them from the isolation sometimes experienced by those in a leadership role and in offering them a

secure base for their regular renewing of their energy. Not only do these groups resource clergy, but they also offer some continuity of attachment that can last for longer than any given ministry post. This study highlights the relevance of attachment theory in a way of benefit to those who support clergy. Counsellors and psychotherapists who work with clergy are likely to be familiar with the importance of attachment to individuals, including themselves as therapists, as it is a core theoretical perspective. However, they may not have thought about the value of their clients' attachment to their extra-parochial groups.

Rule of life

My participants indicated that the rhythm and discipline characteristic of a rule of life was central to their practice of creative repair. The weekly practice or rehearsal of their creative activity groups supported their routine renewal of the energy used in ministry. It was also clear that they had learnt from their experience of not being able to practise creative repair at certain key beginnings in their ministerial life. This highlighted the need to establish useful habits in their training, habits which may not have been modelled to them by important clergy role models whom Bloor has shown to have helped to inspire their own vocation (2013). Those involved in the formation of clergy would be informed by this study that good habits established during training help the ongoing sustaining of future ministry. Those who work with clergy and ordinands might explore with them the regular ways in which they resource themselves. It was clear from my research that clergy need to be intentional about their practice of creative repair and that it is analogous to a rule of life.

It was important for my participants that Jesus balanced active ministry with times of withdrawal from the crowds to be alone with God or with his disciples. My participants' regular setting aside of time for creative repair was an intentional imitation of Christ. This balance had inspired the monastic tradition of a rule of life. Clergy and those who work with clergy might see the benefit of applying this monastic principle to parish life. As clergy are expected to book regular retreat or quiet days, as made explicit by Participant A, adding creative repair to that rhythm of renewal and recreation is a way of anchoring their necessary respite from active ministry.

Those counsellors and psychotherapists who see clergy as part of their practice may or may not share their Christian faith. However, there is an expectation that

they will routinely resource themselves through regular supervision and recreation. Psychodynamic theory is informed by the psychoanalytic tradition, in which an interest in the creative arts dates back to Freud's interest in the humanities (Horden, 1985) and regular opportunities to discuss poetry, films and art are arranged by most psychoanalytic and group-analytic institutions. The findings of my research might help colleagues both to model the need for recreation themselves and to notice how the clergy in their practice seek to resource themselves routinely.

Ways of disseminating the findings

There are five possible areas for the dissemination of these findings. First, through publications, especially a future book; second, through relating to authorities including 'gate-keepers'; third, through ministry training, and furthering of the practice of theological reflection; fourth, through future collaborative research both within church institutions and in a wider therapeutic context; and fifth, through continuing to develop practice. I shall address each of these in turn.

Publications

Following on from previous articles (Holmes, A.C. 2009a,b; 2011; 2015) I shall seek opportunities to publish future articles and papers following the completion of this research study. An invitation to write a book on creative repair once my doctorate is completed has already been issued. This would be addressed to a wider readership than those serving within faith institutions, for example clinical colleagues and those offering pastoral support in various settings. Further, as my experience with the British Voice Association indicated, teachers of all types who have a duty of care to their students would benefit from a book which invites them to review the ways in which they routinely resource themselves.

Relating to authorities

During the course of my research, I was in contact with the then bishop of my diocese, who acted as a gate-keeper to my participants. As part of my transitional conversations between Stage One and Stage Two of the professional doctorate, I spoke to senior clergy in other dioceses. After the doctorate I shall make contact with those who have shown interest in my research and seek advice as to the best way of influencing present and future practice.

My current practice of conducting ministerial development reviews for licensed clergy would be an access point to others who do the same. It should be possible to arrange this via the archdeacon who co-ordinates these reviews. The section of the review which enquires whether clergy are supported in their ministry spiritually, personally and through time for recreation allows us to think carefully about what they have written in response to this question. In these situations, I am expected to be more proactive and the reviewee and I write the summary of the review together before I send it on to the bishop. Comments which various reviewees have made suggest that the review process is rather haphazard and that practice could be made more consistent.

Ministry training and theological reflection

By contacting theological colleges and diocesan officers responsible for continuing ministerial development, I shall seek opportunities to contribute to core training. In particular, I hope to help ordinands to establish healthy habits of self-care, particularly through creative activity groups and to invite established clergy to review their current practice of restoring their spiritual and emotional resources. Whatever their experience of theological reflection, my research could add encouragement and motivation to reflect theologically on the balance between their active and contemplative ministry practice.

Currently I contribute to an annual training offered to curates in hard and soft skills. This involves some initial teaching about what happens in groups, introducing the idea of unconscious dynamics and giving them some hints about managing meetings. Having contributed to training for new incumbents in the past, I will explore further opportunities to develop this in the light of my research not only with established incumbents, but also with a wider range of clergy across the diocese, as part of their CMD.

Further research

Future research into clergy well-being, particularly in a collaborative context, would be worth pursuing. Although the participants in my research come from one particular group of Anglican clergy, many of the findings would be just as relevant not only to other Christian ministers, but also to faith leaders in other religious organisations. Beyond that, the encouragement which I have received from colleagues within the counselling and psychotherapy disciplines suggests that

research into ways in which an applied version of my findings is offered would be useful in the resourcing of others involved in the talking cure.

There would be scope for a future research study on the inclusion of creative repair in the practice of theological reflection. The possibility of setting up creative repair reflective practice groups, similar to the current group initiative by the preventive arm of a new service for GPs being set up by the NHS, would enable clergy to be supported in their practice of individual creative repair. The aims of the NHS initiative include belonging to a group, reducing isolation and preventing burnout. The churches might develop their own preventive strategy. This would also reduce the isolation of some clergy who find it hard to meet people outside of their parish setting. Research into the way in which ministerial development reviews are conducted would identify the extent to which recreation and interests are emphasised.

Continuing to develop practice

In the ordinary process of continuing to work in a number of settings, my findings will go on informing my response to various conversations. This applies both to my private practice clinical work and my facilitative work in NHS and educational settings. In the latter there are sometimes opportunities to encourage the practice of creative repair as a prophylactic habit which helps practitioners to avoid burnout. Although when working with patients I am obliged to maintain a state of abstinence regarding my own interests, when working with colleagues I can sometimes own an interest in the prevention of burnout and offer relevant thoughts implicitly rather than explicitly drawn from my research.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the practice to which this research seeks to contribute. Beginning with my own practice, I have indicated various ways in which my research has influenced its ongoing development. Following this I have suggested ways in which my findings might impact on the future practice of psychotherapists and counsellors who work with clergy. The implications of this have been highlighted via the particular findings within each of my main concepts of creative repair, group and rule of life.

The dissemination of my research will be facilitated in various ways via publications, relating to authorities, training, further research and continuing practice development. I have encountered considerable encouragement and goodwill during my experience of this research. The ideas and findings engendered by this study invite development in a creative and energetic way.

8 Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter begins with the choice of research topic and what it sought to discover. It is followed by the way in which the study was designed and undertaken and the boundaries of the research. The factual, interpretive and conceptual findings are summarised. Possible future research is indicated. Finally the contribution to knowledge and practice is articulated.

In this research I set out to develop and take forward the findings of my MA research. Having discovered that the practice of creative repair had helped clergy either to avoid burnout or to recover from it, I was curious to discover whether it would help to sustain ministry in a regular way. As a group analyst it appeared likely that practising creative repair in a group could help clergy to resource themselves routinely. Using the concepts of creative repair, group, and rule of life I developed the following research question:

What is the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair activities in a group?

The conceptual framework began with my core concept of *creative repair*, to which I added *group* and a *rule of life*. Methodologically the study is located in practical theology, broadly conceived, with its recognition of the value of disciplines such as psychology, ideally suited to my cross-disciplinary study. Practical theology favours qualitative research within which I chose a small-scale research project. Having invited participants using purposive sampling, I conducted recorded semi-structured interviews with the four who responded. In order to 'come close to the data' (Denscombe, 2011, p.275), I transcribed them myself, analysed and interpreted them. After interpreting the data I have returned to my three concepts and commented on the way in which the data relates to each of them. This has helped to identify my contribution to knowledge and the implications for practice.

This design worked well. The semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions drew rich and varied responses from my participants. By coding the data, drawing the categories after referring back to my research question, I interrogated them in order to gain a range of responses. These were grouped and presented with

quotations from the data. Five themes were identified which were interpreted in the light of the literature reviewed earlier, my practice and further literature. This enabled me to present my conceptual findings.

Summary of findings

First, the relevance of *creative repair* to the sustaining of ministry was affirmed by my data. My participants indicated that it was important for their psychological health as part of their ongoing self-care. Their capacity to reflect on their experience may have been a continuation of their training in theological reflection. Creative repair helped the two female participants to build their confidence in their own voice.

Second, the *group* aspect of the practice of creative repair was of benefit to my participants. Not only was it therapeutic in the broad sense of being beneficial, but also the experience of being a member rather than a leader of a group exercised a flexibility of mind which gave them some protection from the dangers of grandiosity and isolation. In addition, their attachment to their creative activity groups facilitated a sense of belonging to a group of people outside of their ministry settings and protected them from a sense of isolation.

Third, my data indicated that the concept of a *rule of life* offered a framework within which there is a balance of different types of active or contemplative ministry, one in which well-being is supported. By including their creative repair in a weekly rhythm as part of a balanced approach to ministry, my participants protected themselves from the dangers of fatigue and isolation. They had learnt from previous experience that it was necessary to be intentional about attending creative activity groups, which highlighted the importance of establishing sustainable habits of creative repair at the beginning of their training and ministry. Whether or not they were living an explicit rule of life, they were influenced by the example of Jesus in their commitment to a balance between active and more contemplative ministry and the need to set aside regular opportunities to resource themselves.

Contribution to knowledge and practice

Contribution to knowledge

This research has contributed to knowledge about the practice of sustainable ministry. Although there has been some reference to the creative arts in general

advice to clergy to have hobbies or interests, the particular role of engagement in the creative arts in a group and as a matter of rhythm and discipline is an original contribution to knowledge. The research offers evidence that creative repair in a group is beneficial to the psychological and professional health of clergy and thus contributes a greater understanding about clergy well-being. In addition the evidence that it can also enhance the confidence of female clergy is a contribution to the growing understanding about the particular needs of women working in a patriarchal tradition. The application of a rule of life to those in parish ministry may not be original, but the possibility of building the practice of creative repair in a group into such a rule of life is a new dimension.

The particular value of being in a group for creative repair has offered clergy the experience of alternating leadership and membership in a figure/ground dynamic. This acts as a prophylactic against the dangers of grandiosity for clergy with their many roles. It also provides them with a group to which they can be attached and which is outside of their parish setting. This can offset the danger of isolation in leadership and allow clergy to access different parts of themselves.

The capacity of clergy to be reflexive allows them to own and monitor their creative repair. If sustainable habits are established at the beginning of their initial ministry education, they are more likely to be continued routinely throughout their future ministry.

Contribution to practice

The broad practice to which I am contributing has three dimensions. First, the clergy themselves; second, those who support clergy and includes mentors, spiritual directors, pastoral supervisors, counsellors and psychotherapists; third, those who form and train clergy. To my knowledge practice has not been addressed in this way before, so that my findings have implications for training and continuing ministerial and professional development. The dissemination of my findings would help this process. It would also affirm the need for counsellors and psychotherapists to restore themselves via their own engagement in the creative arts in groups.

Limitations of the research

This has been a small-scale study with the four participants who responded to my request for volunteers for a purposive sample for qualitative research. A small-scale

study is ideal for a single researcher with no budget and limited time within which to conduct the research (Knight, 2002, p.17; Denscombe, 2010, p.3). Interviewing is 'the most commonly used method of data collection in qualitative research' (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.1). The semi-structured interviews revealed a range of experiences of incumbents in different settings and provided rich data. Although I would have preferred more participants, those who responded to my invitation were ideal for the particular needs of the study. They offered rich variety in terms of type of ministry context, gender and the type of creative activity which they practised in a group.

The study is limited in the sense of having been conducted in one diocese. Further research, perhaps in another diocese of the Church of England or within another Christian denomination, would be valuable in order to discover whether my findings are indicative of a wider range of experience of clergy in a leadership role. Future research might also explore the way in which the annual ministry development review is framed and processed in different Anglican dioceses. This principle might be applied appropriately to other Christian denominations and perhaps even to other religious faith organisations.

Conclusion

This study seeks to expand the literature on the sustaining of ministry for clergy, those who support them and those who form and train them. It set out to investigate the impact on the ministry of clergy of engaging in creative repair in a group. Creative repair was shown to enhance the psychological health of the participants as part of their ongoing self-care. By practising their creative repair as members of a group the four clergy had regular respite from the pressures of their leadership role. Their attachment to their respective creative activity groups gave them a sense of belonging away from their ministry settings and thus reduced the dangers of being isolated. The rhythm of their regular practice was congruent with their wish to model Jesus in balancing active with contemplative ministry. Not only does this indicate the value of applying the discipline of a rule of life to parish ministry, but also that creative repair would be a suitable element of such a rule.

This study has opened up a new way of supporting the sustainable well-being of clergy. It complements the handbooks which have been published by colleagues with expertise in the area (Watts, Nye and Savage, 2002; Rose, 2013; Clark, 2012

and Collicutt, 2015) by focusing on the role of the creative arts in sustaining ministry. It is my belief that this research, when published, will make a contribution to subsequent thinking about the need to support clergy in resourcing themselves in an intentional, disciplined and rhythmic way in order to avoid the dangers of isolation and grandiosity.

Postlude: from creative repair to figure/ground play

Having begun with the inception of the idea of creative repair, I end with two examples of unexpected serendipitous affirmation of my findings which between them embrace creative activity in a group, attachment to a group and implicit figure/ground flexibility.

Recently a spiritual directee told me about a decision which she and her husband had made to move house. When considering their new location she named the choir which was a crucial factor for both of them, to which they still wanted to belong. Demonstrating their attachment to it, she said: 'One of the things about the choir is that we have friends to whom we can say anything exactly as we are and how we feel.' The prospect of downsizing into an unknown area was made bearable by their longstanding attachment to their choir.

During a seminar on the supervision of parent–infant groups, a colleague asked the students on a foundation course in group analysis to role-play a group of parents and infants. There were various props in the space inside the student circle. Volunteers role-played mischievous infants and the parent figures who struggled to manage them. Toys were alternately snatched and shared. Observers reflected on the interplay between the various parent–infant pairs. All the participants had exchanged their roles both of competent practitioners learning about groups and students on the course. Having lost themselves in the amusing role-play, they returned to a discussion format. Back in student mode their interactions were less cautious and more accepting of each other. The role-play had necessitated a flexible mind-set and the students experienced the figure/ground aspect of group-analytic theory.

Learning to be a researcher and writing the thesis has given me both an external and internal experience of the figure/ground concept. Externally, moving between the roles of professional clinician and doctoral student within a cohort of students has been enjoyable and relatively straightforward. Internally and more complex and nuanced has been the need to move between different modes of thinking and writing. The language used by the practitioner in the consulting room tends to be cautious, tentative and courteous. The requirement of the research is to present a thesis by developing and communicating an argument with a more assertive style of language. In order to write the thesis, while continuing to work as a clinician, I had to

develop a symbolic equivalent to this flexibility of mind by moving in and out of cautious and assertive ways of communicating. Rather like a trumpet player in an orchestra who moves between *piano* meaning playing quietly and *piano* meaning playing a solo. This combines creative repair and figure/ground flexibility in the same group activity. And it might all be part of a personal and creative rule of life.

References

- Ansdell, G., 2015. *How Music Helps*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Arnold, J., 2014. *Sacred Music in Secular Society*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Barnes, B., Ernst, S. and Hyde, K., 1999. *An Introduction to Groupwork: A Group-Analytic Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Begbie, J., 2001. Introduction. In: J. Begbie, ed. 2001. *Beholding the Glory*. Michigan: Baker Academic. pp.xi-xv.
- Begbie, J., 2008. *Resounding Truth*. London: SPCK.
- Behr, H. and Hearst, L., 2005. *Group-Analytic Psychotherapy: A Meeting of Minds*. London: Whurr Publishers.
- Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N. and Tarule, J., 1986. *Women's Ways of Knowing*. Reprint 1997. New York: Basic Books.
- Bennett, Z., 2013. *Using the Bible in Practical Theology*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Bennett, Z., 2014. *Your MA in Theology*. London: SCM Press.
- Bennett Moore, Z., 2002. *Introducing Feminist Perspectives on Pastoral Theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Bion, W.R., 1961. *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bloom, M. et al., 2013. *Flourishing in Ministry: Emerging Research Insights on the Well-being of Pastors* [pdf] South Bend, IN: Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame. Available at <http://www.wellbeing.nd.edu/assets/198819/emerging_insights_2_1_pdf> [Accessed 7 September 2017].
- Bloor, A., 2013. "Who shall I be?" Putting on priesthood in the Church of England. In: T. Ling, ed. 2013. *Moving on in Ministry*. London: Church House Publishing. pp.17–30.
- Bolton, G., 2014. *Reflective Practice*. 4th ed. London: Sage.
- Bowlby, J., 1969. *Attachment and Loss: vol. 1 Attachment*. London: Hogarth.
- Bowlby, J., 1979. *The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds*. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Brother Roger, 2012. *Taizé*. London: SPCK.
- Bruce, K., 2016. Being Imaginative. In: J. Harrison and R. Innes, eds. 2016. *Clergy in a Complex Age*. London: SPCK. pp.74-84.
- Bryman, A., 2012. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Butler, L.H. Jr., 2012. Psychological Theory. In: J.J. Miller-McLemore, ed. 2012. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. pp.102-11.

- Cameron, H. and Duce, C., 2013. *Researching Practice in Ministry and Mission*. London: SCM Press.
- Carr, W., 1985. *The Priestly Task*. London: SPCK.
- Carr, W., 1997. *Handbook of Pastoral Studies*. London: SPCK.
- Cherry, S., 2012. Time Wisdom. In: T. Ling and L. Bentley, eds. 2012. *Developing Faithful Ministers*. London: SCM Press. pp.97-107.
- Cherry, S., 2013. *Beyond Busyness*. Durham: Sacristy Press.
- Churchill, W.S., 1932. *Painting as a Pastime*. Reprint 2013. London: Unicorn Press.
- Church of England, 2014. *Criteria for Selection for the Ordained Ministry in the Church of England*. Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council.
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/selection_criteria_for_ordained_ministry.pdf> [Accessed 28 January 2018].
- Church Society Trust, 2010. *Clergy Appointments: What are Resolutions A & B?* Watford: Church Society Trust.
- Clark, M., 2012. *Understanding Religion and Spirituality in Clinical Practice*. London: Karnac.
- Coate, M.A., 1989. *Clergy Stress: The Hidden Conflicts in Ministry*. London: SPCK.
- Cocksworth, C. and Brown, R., 2006. *Being a Priest Today*. 2nd ed. London: Canterbury Press Norwich.
- Collicutt, J., 2015. *The Psychology of Christian Character Formation*. London: SCM Press.
- Croft, S. and Walton, R., 2005. *Learning for Ministry*. London: Church House Publishing.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., 1990. *Flow*. New York: Harper & Row.
- De Caussade, J-P., 1981. *The Sacrament of the Present Moment*. Translated by K. Muggeridge. London: Collins.
- De Waal, E., 1995. *A Life-Giving Way*. London: Mowbray.
- Denscombe, M., 2010. *The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects*. 4th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J. and Sanders, L., 2012. The Challenge of Defining Wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), pp.222-35.
- Doehring, C., 2006. *The Practice of Pastoral Care*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Dunstan, P., 1997. *This Poor Sort*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Durà-Vilà, G. 2016. *Sadness, Depression, and the Dark Night of the Soul*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Erikson, E., 1950. *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton.

- Esquerro, A., 2017. *Encounters with John Bowlby*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Etherington, K., 2004. *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Farrington, D.K., 2000. *Living Faith Day by Day*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.
- Flick, U., 2014. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. 5th ed. London: Sage.
- Ford, D., 2012. *The Shape of Living*. London: SCM Press.
- Foulkes, E., 1990. ed. *Selected Papers of S.H.Foulkes*. London: Karnac.
- Foulkes, S.H., 1964. *Therapeutic Group Analysis*. London: Karnac.
- Foulkes, S.H., 1986. *Group Analytic Psychotherapy*. London: Karnac.
- Freud, S., 1991. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. London: Penguin Books.
- Gerhardt, S., 2004. *Why Love Matters*. Hove: Brunner-Routledge.
- Gerity, L., 2000a. Preface. In: E. Kramer, ed. 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley. pp.9-11.
- Gerity, L., 2000b. Inner Satisfaction and External Success. In: E. Kramer, ed. 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley. pp.232-37.
- Gibb, M., 2017. *An Abuse of Faith*. Available at <<http://www.churchofengland.org>> [Accessed 25 June 2017].
- Gilligan, C., 1993. *In a Different Voice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gilligan, C., 2011. *Joining the Resistance*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Glenn, L., 1987. 'Attachment Theory and Group Analysis: The Group Matrix as a Secure Base'. *Group Analysis*, 20(2), pp.109-26.
- Gombrich, E.H., 1953. *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon.
- Graham, E., 1996. *Transforming Practice*. Reprint 2002. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Graham, E., 2000. Practical Theology as Transforming Practice. In: J. Woodward and S. Pattison, eds. 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell. pp.104-17.
- Graham, E., Walton, H. and Ward, F., 2005. *Theological Reflection: Methods*. London: SCM Press.
- Graham, E., Walton, H. and Ward, F., 2007. *Theological Reflection: Sources*. London: SCM Press.
- Handy, C., 1993. *Understanding Organizations*. 4th ed. London: Penguin Books.
- Harries, R. 1993. *Art and the Beauty of God*. London: Mowbray.
- Harrison, J. and Innes, R., Appendix: Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy. In Harrison, J. and Innes, R. eds., 2016. *Clergy in a Complex Age*. London: SPCK. pp. 133-56.
- Holmes, A.C., 2009a. 'New Ways to Mount up Like Eagles'. *Church Times*, 7650, p.10.

- Holmes, A.C., 2009b. *Choose Your Companions from Among the Best*. MA. Anglia Ruskin University.
- Holmes, A.C., 2011. 'Choose Your Companions from the Best'. *Practical Theology*, 4(1), pp.67-81.
- Holmes, A.C., 2015. 'The Role of the Creative Arts in Initial Ministerial Education'. *Holiness*, 1(1), pp.89-98.
- Holmes, J., 2001. *The Search for the Secure Base*. Hove: Routledge.
- Hopper, E. and Weinberg, H. eds., 2011. *The Social Unconscious in Persons, Groups and Societies, Volume 1: Mainly Theory*. London: Karnac.
- Horden, P. ed., 1985. *Freud and the Humanities*. London: Duckworth.
- Hurding, R., 2013. *Five Pathways to Wholeness*. London: SPCK.
- Illman, R. and Smith, W.A., 2013. *Theology and the Arts*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Isherwood, I. and McEwan, D., 2001. *Introducing Feminist Theology*. 2nd ed. Sheffield. Sheffield Academic Press.
- Ison, D. ed., 2005. *The Vicar's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing.
- Jacobs, M., 1986. *The Presenting Past*. London: Harper & Row.
- King, N. and Horrocks, C., 2010. *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Kirwan, M., 2004. *Discovering Girard*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Klein, M., 1992. *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945*. London: Karnac.
- Knight, P., 2002. *Small-Scale Research*. London: Sage.
- Kramer, E. ed., 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Kumar, R., 2014. *Research Methodology*. 4th ed. London: Sage.
- Lamdin, K. and Tilley, D., 2007. *Supporting New Ministers in the Local Church*. London: SPCK.
- Lartey, E., 2000. Practical Theology as a Theological Form. In: J. Woodward and S. Pattison, eds. 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell. pp.128-34.
- Lawson, F., 2005. Spiritual Life. In: D. Ison, ed. 2005. *The Vicar's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing. pp.39-55.
- Leach, J., 2015. 'The End of Theological Education – Is Wisdom the Principal Thing?' *Holiness*, 1(1), pp.21-55.
- Leach, J. and Paterson, M., 2015. *Pastoral Supervision*. 2nd ed. London: SCM Press.
- Lee, C. and Horsman, S., 2002. *Affirmation and Accountability*. Exeter: Society of Mary and Martha.

- Levens, M., 2001. Analytically Informed Art Therapy. In: Y. Searle and I. Streng, eds. 2001. *Where Analysis Meets the Arts*. London: Karnac.
- Liamputtong, P., 2011. *Focus Group Methodology*. London: Sage.
- Litvinoff, S., 1993. *The RELATE Guide to Starting Again*. London: Vermilion.
- Lynch, G., 2002. *Pastoral Care and Counselling*. London: Sage.
- MacCulloch, D., 2004. *Reformation*. London: Penguin Books.
- MacIntyre, A., 2011. *After Virtue*. 3rd ed. London: Bloomsbury.
- Malone, G., 2012. *Choir*. London: Collins.
- Marrone, M., 1994. Attachment Theory and Group Analysis. In: D. Brown and L. Zinkin, eds. 1994. *The Psyche and the Social World*. London: Routledge. pp.146-62.
- Marrone, M., 2014. *Attachment and Interaction*. 2nd ed. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Maslow, A.H., 1954. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Mason, K., 1992. *Priesthood and Society*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.
- McLeod, J., 1993. *An Introduction to Counselling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- McLeod, J., 2001. *Qualitative Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.
- McLure, B. I., 2010. *Moving Beyond Individualism in Pastoral Care and Counselling*. Eugene, OR: Cascade.
- Mental Health Foundation, 2015. *Work Life Balance*. Available at: <<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/w/work-life-balance>> [Accessed 13 December 2015].
- Methodist Church, 2017. *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church* [pdf. Conf-2017-cpd-vol-2] available at <<http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1362/conf-2017-cpd-vol-2.pdf>> [Accessed 9 January 2018].
- Middleton, K., 2015. *Refuel*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Miller, H., 1984. *Finding a Personal Rule of Life*. Cambridge: Grove Books.
- Miller-McLemore, B.J. ed., 2012. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Nash, S. and Nash, P., 2009. *Tools for Reflective Ministry*. London: SPCK.
- Nichols, A., 2007. *Redeeming Beauty*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Norton, K., 2016. *Singing and Wellbeing*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Obholzer, A. with Miller, S., 2004. Leadership, Followership and Facilitating the Creative Workplace. In: C. Huffington, D. Armstrong, W. Halton, L. Hoyle and J. Pooley, eds. 2004. *Working Below the Surface*. London: Karnac. pp.33-48.
- O'Connor, E., 1975. *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Ormay, A.P.T., 2012. *The Social Nature of Persons*. London: Karnac.
- Paffenroth, K., 1999. *Allegorizations of the Active and Contemplative Lives in Philo, Origen, Augustine, and Gregory*. Available at: <http://eole.evansvilles.edu/articles/allegory.html> [Accessed 12 April 2013].
- Paterson, M. and Rose, J., 2013. *Enriching Ministry*. London: SCM Press.
- Pattison, S., 2000. *Shame*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pattison, S., 2007. *The Challenge of Practical Theology*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Pedrick, C. and Clutterbuck, D., 2005. Professional and spiritual support. In: J. Witcombe, ed. 2005. *The Curate's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing. pp. 103-08.
- Percy, E., 2014. *What Clergy Do*. London: SPCK.
- Percy, M., 2006. *Clergy: The Origin of Species*. London: Continuum.
- Perls, F., Hefferline, R.F. and Goodman, P., 1951. *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality*. New York: Dell.
- Peyton, N. and Gatrell, C., 2013. *Managing Clergy Lives*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Pick, D., 2015. *Psychoanalysis: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Roberts, J., 1991. A View of the Current State of the Practice. In: J. Roberts and M. Pines, eds. 1991. *The Practice of Group Analysis*. London: Routledge. pp.3-17.
- Robson, C., 2011. *Real World Research*. 3rd ed. Chichester: Wiley.
- Rose, J., 2013. *Psychology for Pastoral Contexts*. London: SCM Press.
- Ross, A., 2016. *Sigmund Freud*. Stroud: History Press.
- Ross, A., 2018. When Psyche Returns to the Soul. In: A. Anderson, ed. 2018. *Thresholds*. Lutterworth: BACP. pp.8-11.
- Runcorn, D., 2005. Self-Management. In: D. Ison, ed. 2005. *The Vicar's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing. pp.19-38.
- Rycroft, C., 1972. *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. London: Penguin.
- Saldaña, J., 2016. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. London: Sage.
- Sayers, J., 2000. *Kleinians: Psychoanalysis Inside Out*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Segal, H., 1986. *The Work of Hannah Segal*. London: Free Association Books.
- Shipani, D.S., 2012. Case Study Method. In: B.J. Miller-McLemore, ed. 2012. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. pp.91-101.
- Simons, H., 2009. *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: Sage.
- Society of St Francis, 2010. *The Daily Office*. London: Mowbray.
- Stacey, R., 2003. *Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics*. 4th edition. Harlow: Pearson Education.

- Stanton, H., 2017. *For Peace and for Good*. London: Canterbury Press.
- Steiner, G., 1989. *Real Presences*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Storr, A., 1997. *Churchill's Black Dog and Other Phenomena of the Human Mind*. London: HarperCollins.
- Swinton, J. and Mowat, H., 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM Press.
- Symington, J. and Symington, N., 1996. *The Clinical Thinking of Wilfrid Bion*. London: Routledge.
- Taylor, M., 2014. *Trauma Therapy and Clinical Practice: Neuroscience, Gestalt and the Body*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Thomas, R.S., 1993. *Collected Poems 1945-1990*. London: Dent.
- Thompson, J., Pattison, S. and Thompson, R., 2008. *Theological Reflection*. London: SCM Press.
- Tidey, T., 2013. *Supporting Ministers with Ill Health*. Available at: <<http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/media/176392/conf-2013-20-supporting-ministers-with-ill-health.pdf>> [Accessed 19 May 2014].
- Tuckman, B., 1965. 'Developmental Sequence in Small Groups'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63 (6), pp.384-99.
- Turri, M., 2017. *Acting, Spectating and the Unconscious*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Walker, D., 2016. Keeping well. In: Harrison, J. and Innes, R. eds. *Clergy in a Complex Age*. London: SPCK. pp.96-106.
- Walliman, N., 2011. *Your Research Project*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.
- Watts, F., Nye, R. and Savage, S., 2002. *Psychology for Christian Ministry*. London: Routledge.
- Webster, A., 2002. *Wellbeing*. London: SCM Press.
- Whitehead, H., 2013. Affirmation and Accountability: Moving on Through Ministerial Development Review. In: T. Ling, ed. 2013. *Moving on in Ministry*. London: Church House Publishing. pp.142-55.
- Williams, R., 2003. *Silence and Honeycakes*. Oxford: Lion.
- Williams, R., 2005. *Grace and Necessity*. London: Continuum.
- Williams, R., 2007. A Theology of Health for Today. In: J. Baxter, ed., 2007. *Wounds that Heal*. London: SPCK. pp.3-14.
- Williams, R., 2017. *Holy Living: the Christian Tradition for Today*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Winkett, L., 2010. *Our Sound is our Wound: Contemplative Listening to a Noisy World*. London: Continuum.

Winnicott, D., 1964. *The Child, the Family and the Outside World*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Winnicott, D., 1971. *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Winnicott, D., 1986. *Home is Where We Start From*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Woodward, J. and Pattison, S. eds. 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Zaretsky, E., 1998. Melanie Klein and the Emergence of Modern Personal life. In: J.

Phillips and I. Stonebridge, eds. 1998. *Reading Melanie Klein*. London: Routledge. pp.32-50.

Appendix A

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

GUILT AS A BLOCK TO CREATIVE REPAIR

ANNE C. HOLMES SID: XXX

A paper in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for Stage 1 of Anglia Ruskin University
for the degree of Doctorate in Practical Theology

Submitted: September 2012

ABSTRACT

GUILT AS A BLOCK TO CREATIVE REPAIR

ANNE C. HOLMES

September 2012

Following on from my MA dissertation, which developed the idea of *creative repair* as a way of preventing clergy burnout, my experience of leading workshops with clergy and ordinands has indicated the role of guilt as a block to the practice of creative repair. Creative repair is regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing the energy expended in sensitive pastoral care. In this paper, I seek to explore the meaning of this guilt in both psychological and theological frameworks.

I draw on the theology of Rowan Williams, especially his notion of 'inhabited flesh' and connect this with my experience of supporting change in my practice as a psychotherapist.

I engage in a critical conversation with Stephen Pattison, especially his book, *Shame*. I find similarity between Pattison's description of different types of shame and different types of guilt as experienced in psycho-analytical writing and the practice of psychodynamic therapy.

I reflect on the possible early origins of guilt and shame in the context of Erikson's model of life stages and aspects of my training as a psychotherapist.

Having identified both the role of early experience and the need for community as possible factors contributing to the role of guilt as a block to creative repair, I indicate the next task of my research to be developed in Paper Two.

CONTENTS

References	ii
Abstract	iii
Introduction	1
Rowan Williams	2
Persecutory Guilt	5
Stephen Pattison	5
Stephen Pattison's <i>Shame</i>	8
Critique of Stephen Pattison's <i>Shame</i>	11
Erikson's Model of Life Stages	14
Conclusion	16

Rowan Williams: 'God calls us into the world to find out what he's doing and join in' (Lewis, 2011) – thus curiosity becomes a divine virtue.

Given my recent work on the value of creative repair in the prevention of clergy burnout, what is it that prevents clergy from engaging regularly with the creative arts as a way of fending off emotional, spiritual and psychological exhaustion?

Introduction

This paper seeks to take forward the ideas presented in my M. A. dissertation, 'Choose your companions from among the best' (Holmes, 2009). Although my earlier research indicated the value of *creative repair*⁶ in the prevention of clergy burnout, in practice there seem to be factors preventing clergy from engaging regularly with the creative arts. Some clues have emerged from several workshops on creative repair which I have led over the last two years.

Firstly, in addition to the usual busy lifestyle deemed to be essential by most clergy, it has emerged that even during official time off, anything that looks like real pleasure is viewed with suspicion or guilt by some serious Christians.

Secondly, some clergy seem very task-oriented. During my research for my M. A. dissertation, it was reported by participants that even the act of filling in my simple questionnaire helped to resource them and repair their depleted emotional, psychological and spiritual resources. The task of completing the questionnaire seemed to give them permission to reflect on the need to resource themselves and highlighted the importance of engaging in their own creativity. The tackling of a task can override habitual resistance to having time off; so, by responding to my request, my participants surprised themselves into an experience of creative repair.

Thirdly, clergy, even in formation, seem to find it hard to think of their own needs. Recently, I ran a workshop on creative repair with ordinands and expanded the

⁶ *Creative repair* is regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing the energy expended in sensitive pastoral care (Holmes, 2009).

discussion from the creative arts to sport, running, walking with or without a dog and other recreational pursuits. I gave them permission to think about what resources they compared to what drains them. Sitting in the lecture room, there was no resistance to considering the need for creative leisure, but their concern was that when this is practised in a ministerial context, they find it hard to prioritise time for their own needs or desires.

Fourthly, while the need for boundaries in ministry is recognised in theory by practitioners (Ison, 2005; Witcombe, 2005), it is rarely managed well in practice, partly because of their overpowering need to help others.

Fifthly, both clergy and ordinands have indicated that this difficulty in maintaining boundaries includes finding it hard to say 'no' to a request. This seems to them to be uncharitable if not guilt-provoking. The tendency of clergy to over-commit themselves, even if questioned during the formation process, could set up conditions leading to exhaustion or even burnout, unless good habits are formed right from the start. At various points over the last two years or so, workshop participants have indicated that they feel guilty if they attend to their own needs rather than the needs of others. It is this feeling of guilt which I would like to focus on.

As a consequence of the reluctance of many clergy to consider their own needs, an imbalance occurs. While there is a clear commitment to liturgy, pastoral care and administration, there is no clear commitment to the replenishment of those emotional and psychological resources which are expended in the various tasks of ministry. During most psychotherapy training courses, it is assumed that the emotional and psychological resources drawn on during rewarding yet demanding work with patients need to be renewed routinely. It would indeed be guilt-provoking not to do this as psychotherapists are duty-bound to model good practice. However this does not seem to be the case with clergy and therefore I would like to explore the nature of their guilt by reflecting on the difference between theological and psychoanalytical ways of thinking, while reflecting in a general way on my own clinical practice with individuals, many of whom are Christians.

Rowan Williams

From a theological perspective, I embrace the views of Rowan Williams, as expressed in the opening paper of *Wounds that Heal* (Williams, 2007). He suggests that the whole business of theology is to trace how God transforms flesh, how God makes flesh inhabited, by creating living relationship within himself (Williams, 2007, p.5):

Ultimately it's not just that God has made a world to be inhabited, but that God has made a world which *God* purposes to inhabit and which in some sense God does already inhabit in that wisdom, that beauty, that order, that alluring wonder which is there in our environment . . . [The] pivotal moment is when God fully and unequivocally inhabits that life which is Jesus of Nazareth, that death and that resurrection which belong to Jesus of Nazareth and which make all the difference to your body and mine so that our own inhabiting of the world changes. (Williams, 2007, pp. 10–11)

Williams was giving the inaugural Hildegard Lecture in 2003, so that it seems odd that, almost ten years later, these words come over as radical in their implication as expressed a little later: 'the Good News the gospel tells us is that, first of all the world is inhabited by its maker; second, that the maker of the world has made it possible for us to inhabit the world more fully, more deeply, more joyfully than we could ever have possibly imagined' (Williams, 2007, p. 11). This seems to offer a clear theological justification for the need to engage fully with the creation and, I would argue, in particular, with the creative arts as a living expression of God's continuing creativity.

The idea of *shalom* in Judaism indicates full flourishing and it comes to my mind when Williams answers the question: Is theology a story of healing?⁷ Drawing on Lossky's suggestion that you look at holy people if you want to know what the Holy Spirit looks like, he explains: 'you look at inhabited faces, faces that stopped being

⁷ I first realised the importance of this in Jewish thinking when attending a lecture on medical ethics given by the former Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits in the early 1980s.

flesh in the negative sense . . . the untenanted, the empty space, where relation doesn't happen, the spark doesn't kindle, where there is a kind of deadness and a kind of isolation which makes us less than human' (Williams, 2007, p.13). He reminds us that we learn to live in heaven only when we learn to live on earth in the here and now and inhabit the space which God has given us.

This idea of inhabiting the space which God has given us seems to me to be entirely consistent with the idea of creative repair. If the priest or minister is alongside another in a receptive, incarnational way, accompanying the other in pain or grief, then it is essential for her or him to replenish the emotional, psychological and spiritual resources that have been thus poured out.⁸ While it is true that some encounters are themselves mutually replenishing, unless they are in the habit of self-observation, clergy may not discern those encounters which drain them. Also, they often go from one task to another.

Drawing on my work with some clergy who get run down, in my clinical judgement, an idealised view of the role contributes to their fatigue and a culture of endless self-sacrifice justifies the ignoring of fatigue. Two participants in my earlier research indicated that this slowly accrues to burnout and can actually mean that the pastor is obliged to go on sick leave and therefore be totally unavailable to others.⁹

Williams gives a hint of one of the causes of this when he mentions the role of habit. Considering the notion of *sin*, as seen by St Paul in Galatians 5, he compares it to uninhabited flesh: 'the flesh used in a meaningless, a destructive or an isolating way, and our simple habits, things that keep us prisoner in our own relation with God, the things that set a ceiling on our growth towards God' (Williams, 2007, p. 9, my underlining) have a lot to do with that sense of uninhabited flesh. This role of

⁸ I mean this in the sense described by David Lyall (2001) who considers that one implication of the incarnation is that the communication of Christian truth is relational rather than propositional and that another implication sees the Rogerian core therapeutic conditions of genuineness, acceptance and empathy in the pastoral relationship as part of the *agape* of God (2001, p. 96-7).

⁹ A recent article in the *Church Times* supports this: "many conscientious clergy . . . get signed off by their GP with stress, depression, exhaustion, anxiety, or breakdown' (Horsman, 2012, p. 23).

habit is one of the core themes of most psychological help. If we can change some of our habits, then we have a chance of opening up ourselves to fresh vision, fresh confidence in our ability to respond each day to the opportunities for growth and development. However change is hard to bring about and I shall return to this later.

Persecutory Guilt

A feeling of *guilt* has been given in some of my creative repair workshops as a reason why clergy fail to resource themselves via regular active participation in the creative arts. I would like to explore the meaning of this. Within psychoanalytic literature there is a known phenomenon of *persecutory guilt* when a person feels guilty if engaging in something at all enjoyable or self-enhancing. Melanie Klein has connected this deep sense of guilt with early life (1992, p. 309). At first sight this seems an odd use of the concept of guilt, which is usually associated with feelings of regret about having done or said something which has harmed another person.

However guilt is a complex emotion. Within the field of practical theology, Stephen Pattison has explored the nature of shame, a similar complex emotion, in his key text *Shame* (2000). As a way of exploring different types of guilt within practical theology, I would therefore like to engage in a critical conversation with Pattison.

I am also aware that the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson thought that both guilt and shame could be traced back to incomplete resolution of early life stages. It is therefore my intention to engage in the critical conversation with Pattison and then to consider the implications of growth and development through various life stages, especially those which have been linked to guilt and shame in the mid twentieth century by Erikson. I will then consider the dynamics of growth, blocked growth and the struggle to change as known in my twenty-five years of clinical work as a psychotherapist and psychodynamic counsellor.

Stephen Pattison

While it is my intention to focus on *Shame* (2000), some of Stephen Pattison's other works are evidence of his wish to understand the nature of pastoral care. Reading some of these has helped me to place *Shame* in the context of his thinking.

An important work is *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology* (1997). It was challenging for me to read a Marxist perspective. When I read history in the 1960s, I was wary of the Marxist school represented by such writers as Christopher Hill and Rodney Hilton, as it seemed that they had espoused a doctrine and were imposing it on their reading of history. Of course it offered a vital critique of previous approaches which seemed to privilege the powerful and political, while underestimating the importance of social context and class issues. Pattison is mindful of the danger of embracing Marxist ideology uncritically, while welcoming the need to think about the use and abuse of power. He draws on the ability of Marxism to challenge the excessive focus on the individual which has become so prevalent in the last fifty years or so. His logical and astute connection between the dynamics of liberation theology and those of pastoral care highlights the moral need to include the excluded. This builds up to a focus in Chapter 12 on those with mental health problems and the way in which they have been marginalised in our society. He indicates that the chaplains who work among them also become marginalised. In the next chapter he writes : 'the situation of mentally ill people must be seen in the context of the whole socio-political order. The mental health services form a microcosm of society, reflecting dominant interests and values. Mental illness and its treatment are profoundly affected by socio-political factors like social class . . . So psychiatric hospitals, for example, can be seen as part of the mechanism of social control' (Pattison, 1997, p. 185).

Having worked as a mental health chaplain in two linked psychiatric hospitals for five years, I have witnessed the way in which those with mental health problems represent the Cinderella area of the NHS. What was quite disturbing was the way in which patients became less and less visible during my five years as buildings were re-ordered and wards became locked. Mental health patients tend to be less inhibited than other members of society and this can be hard for administrative staff to witness. As an example, one patient used to sit on a bench near the entrance to what was then the headquarters of the trust. Before long the bench was removed. Later the whole headquarters removed to a business park some distance away, so

that only staff members could access the administrators. More recently I have observed that even the words 'mental health' have been removed from the name of the trust. An individualist approach to the world allows for those with mental health problems to carry the split-off parts of those who do not want to acknowledge their own fragility. Looking at this through Pattison's quasi-Marxist lens, this makes sense as an example of social control. Reading this key book by Pattison and connecting it with my own experience of mental health chaplaincy helped to affirm my wish to engage with Pattison's study of shame. This may also raise the question, *mutatis mutandis*, of a cultural dimension to the role of guilt in blocking the capacity of clergy to engage routinely in creative repair.

In an earlier book, *Alive and Kicking: Towards a Practical Theology of Illness and Healing* (1989), Pattison critiques the Christian healing ministry and in particular the problems attending any attempt to bring together religion and medicine. This clearly thought-out study is drawn from a wide range of sources. Having been involved in the Christian healing ministry from the mid-1980s, I recognise the validity in what he says about the narrow biblical interpretation and individualistic bias within the revival of this important ministry. His aim in this book is 'to point up the need for a deeper engagement with the nature of illness and healing and to invite readers to reflect on their own perceptions on the nature of these things' (Pattison, 1989, p. 142). He lists a number of questions to help the readers to focus their minds and, characteristically, indicates the importance of placing Christian healing responses within a wider search for justice and healing for society as a whole. He also highlights the need to consider which values and power relationships are affirmed or denied by particular perspectives on illness and healing and the practices which are associated with them. This would seem to connect with the importance of fully inhabited flesh as considered by Williams (2007, p. 11).

In a more recent book of collected essays, *The Challenge of Practical Theology* (2007), Pattison summarises his own approach in the introduction. He lists a series of qualities all beginning with the letter 'p' – practical, pastoral, personal, political, popular, partial, passionate, public and polemical – and then adds professional or practitioner oriented (2007, pp. 18-19). His aim is to help professionals to explore critically 'their values, identity and performance so that they can change it to be more responsive and responsible in relation to their clients . . . In this context, I have

also tried both to be academically professional (competent, critical, conscientious, judicious) as well as being critical of my own role and function within my occupational context' (2007, p. 19).

This resonates for me as a psychotherapist as I routinely take my work to a colleague for professional supervision as well as supervising others. It is this level of self-critical engagement which encourages me to begin a critical conversation with Pattison in his understanding of the meaning of shame and guilt.

Considering these various texts, it seems that Pattison has worked through his thinking about pastoral care from the useful base point of liberation theology to the need to liberate himself from the tyranny of chronic shame. His chapters on mental health and HIV Aids in his earlier books, *Alive and Kicking: Towards a Practical Theology of Illness* and *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology*, demonstrate a clear connection between practical theology and those who are marginalised in our society. That he should take this thinking further into an analysis of shame in which he integrates his personal experience with his intellectual discipline makes complete sense and I should like now to reflect on this work.

Stephen Pattison's *Shame*

Initially Pattison sets out to understand the phenomenon of shame in his own life. Beyond this he has three aims: to provide an overview; to consider chronic shame and to consider the relationship between the ideology and practice associated with Christianity and human experiences of shame. His methodology is that of a critical conversation within the discipline of practical theology. He explains the model briefly and divides the book into three parts.

The first part, 'Approaching Shame', provides preliminary theoretical orientation to the phenomenon of shame and considers methodological and epistemological issues relevant to understanding the approaches and discourse surrounding shame. He indicates that the word 'shame' embraces a family of meanings and phenomena, not a single experience or definition.

The second part, 'Encountering Shame', aims to be practical and immediately accessible. This serves to introduce the phenomenon of chronic or dysfunctional shame, the focus of the book. He explores its aetiology and implications in an individual context, then expands this to a broader, social context.

The third part, 'Shame and Christianity', critically examines the relationship between contemporary Christian thought and practice and shamed groups and individuals. He concludes that there is a need for more adequate Christian approaches to shame and makes various suggestions to that end.

One theme running through the book is his dialogue between shame and guilt. For example, he writes: 'One of the main characteristics of feeling subjectively shamed in front of an internalised other is that it feels that *the whole of one's self is involved* . . . It is not so much one's specific actions that are scrutinised, as they might be in guilt' (Pattison, 2000, p. 73). He believes that shame is more debilitating than guilt (2000, pp. 7–8).

While using the method of critical conversation to assess the present position regarding the discussion of shame in the literature, Pattison also seems to use the concept of guilt in a similar but less formal way. He makes many references to guilt in order to define shame. For example he writes, 'Theologians use the word shame *en passant*, but most direct theological attention has been focussed upon guilt and offence as the main constituents of sin and alienation from God and humanity' (Pattison, 2000, p. 226). This method helps him to define what he understands to be chronic shame.

By drawing on his own experience of shame, Pattison gives authenticity and integrity to his account. At the end of the book he reflects on the impact that writing the book has had on his own experiences of himself. Not only was it personally cathartic, but in addition, he has drawn on recent theological writings which have a more affirming view of creation and humanity than much of the Augustinian stream of thinking: 'An ambivalent, and somewhat pessimistic, view of the fallen individual

self has pervaded Christianity from Augustine to the present. This provides a poor basis for constructing a positive view of the self, self-esteem or personal pride' (Pattison, 2000, p. 255). His exploration of alternative ways of thinking appears to have released him from some of the faith-induced reinforcement of the chronic shame from which he suffered from childhood onwards. The very act of facing his demon, shame, in this courageous way has built on the psychotherapy which was clearly crucial in his recovery process.

It also provides an example of creative repair. As I am looking at what blocks creative repair for clergy, this release from early faith-based reinforcement of chronic shame might be a major feature of why some clergy find this so difficult. In Pattison's case, the vast amount of reading easily referred to during the text and listed in the extensive bibliography also appears to have freed him from the tyranny of self-exclusion. In addition, his use of a painting by Roger Van der Weyden adds a visual dimension to the repair of his damaged internal object via the creative arts.

Shame can of course also be experienced as a block to creativity, as Pattison indicates:

[W]hen I am writing a book, a lecture, or paper for publication, as I am at the moment, I find it very difficult to write the words down, even though I can change them many times before they are published. It feels as if every word has to be squeezed out of me, over my dead body, so to speak. Reflecting on this experience, I think I am inhibited as well as pleased by the thought that many other people are going to read my words and may find them unclear, incomprehensible, inadequate or stupid. An internal audience of potential 'critics' looks over my shoulder as I write and discourages me from even trying to express myself in words. I have to overcome my primary and perpetual inner fear of being found wanting, and so being rejected and ridiculed, in order to write. (Pattison, 2000, p. 94)

This is an example of the way in which Pattison contributes to our understanding of the power of shame to block our creativity. By continuing to write despite his internal struggle, Pattison gives the wish to write the benefit of the doubt and thus confronts his internal critics. Later on, while discussing the role of the mother/infant relationship in engendering shame, he writes: 'The ingression of the unexpected – for example, not seeing the mother's face when expected and seeing a stranger's instead – can bring about a reaction of shame. If an infant fails to express itself successfully and so experiences a sense of inefficacy or inadequacy, shame may arise. (Perhaps this is the root of my writer's block when it comes to public documents!)' (Pattison, 2000, p. 102) Pattison's familiarity with some of the literature of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy as well as his personal experience as a patient gives him a useful and liberating lens through which to view his own experience.

In his introduction, Pattison writes about his own experience of shame: 'I believe myself to have been a shame-bound person for most of my life, regarding myself as unworthy, valueless and defiled' (2000, p. 7), and was disappointed to continue to feel bad about himself despite being a Christian from an early age. He assumed that it was due to his failure to trust God and do his will enough. He reflects on writing an early essay on the theory and therapy of guilt from which he came away puzzled. Guilt was connected in the literature with the committing of an offence, whether real or fantasised, against another person or a moral rule. Therapy of forgiveness would lie in acknowledgement of the offence and reparation where appropriate. So far, so good. Then he comments: 'At this point, the guilty feeling should depart. My problem was that I felt non-specifically bad most of the time, whether or not I had committed any offences against God or other people . . . I realised that this was not real guilt, but did not have a vocabulary to describe my condition' (2000, pp. 7-8).

Further on in his book, Pattison is at pains to draw a distinction between ordinary shame and chronic shame, and between guilt and shame. He struggles with the difference between shame and guilt in his chapter on problems in approaching shame. In a section on the assimilation of shame to guilt, he writes:

Shame has been obscured from view by being assimilated to, and hidden behind, the concept of guilt. Both shame and guilt may be described as emotions of negative self-assessment. It is probably futile to try and make any absolute distinction between these two concepts or states in terms of common parlance. However, for the most part, any feeling of self-censure and negative self-evaluation in Western culture has been described as guilt and this usage continues to the present day. (Pattison, 2000, p. 43)

He offers two reasons for this: firstly that these states may occur more or less simultaneously; secondly that feelings of guilt are perhaps easier to handle and do something with than feelings of shame. Crucially he writes: 'The guilty person may feel bad because of having committed some offence. However he or she has the possibility of maintaining self-esteem and self-efficacy by taking appropriate action. The shamed person is likely to feel a sense of personal collapse that implies the loss of self-esteem and self-efficacy' (Pattison, 2000, p. 44).

Critique of Stephen Pattison's *Shame*

Just as Pattison draws a distinction between ordinary and chronic shame, I would want to draw a distinction between ordinary and persecutory guilt. I would like to suggest that guilt and shame are inextricably linked within the psyche. Where I agree with him is that shame is harder to relieve than guilt, which does lend itself to the possibility of reparation. My understanding of shame is that our task is to *bear* it rather than repair or in any way resolve it, but that first we need to sort out what is what. Some shame, like persecutory guilt, may be the result of past abuse, when the victim internalises (the technical word would be introjects [Rycroft, 1972, pp. 77-8]) the split-off guilt/responsibility of the perpetrator. This whole dynamic is then internalised, so that long after the abuse has ended in the external world, the victim continues to persecute her/himself in perpetuity, unless challenged in some, usually therapeutic, context.

I would also like to include the possibility of collective or trans-generational guilt and/or shame and the difficulty in shedding these internal burdens. It can make a huge difference to the individual's psychic burden to separate out whose pain is

whose. Often the pain passes unconsciously from one generation to another, especially if there is a culture of 'keeping a brave face' or presenting a 'stiff upper lip' so that there are many who do not even allow themselves to cry at the funerals of close friends or relatives.

I would argue, from my experience of clinical work, that when people suffer from an internalised sense of persecutory guilt, it affects the whole of their personhood, rather than specific actions. This has definite parallels with chronic shame. It's as if there is an ontological state of *being* guilty or shameful rather than regretting or feeling ashamed of having *done* something.

I welcome Pattison's comments on the power of shame to block our creativity, which accords with some of my clinical experience. One example comes to mind from one of my analytic psychotherapy groups many years ago. One member struggled with creative block. Every time she faced the computer screen and wrote something, she would immediately delete it, convinced that it was of no value. After working in the group for some time, she found a way of overcoming this destructive process. Each time she wrote, she would say to herself: 'I know it's rubbish but I am writing anyway', thus acknowledging the internal negativity while not allowing it to triumph over her wish and professional need to write. This was a useful intermediary experience which enabled her to develop the habit of writing. Later she had the opportunity to revise the drafts which had no longer been routinely deleted. In other words she separated her task from her sense of who she was as a person.

Earlier I quoted Pattison's disappointment about the failure of guilty feelings to depart (2000, pp. 7-8). I would like to comment on two aspects of this quotation. Firstly, I do not believe that the word 'should' belongs to feelings. I believe this to be what philosophers are wont to call a 'category mistake' (Wolfram, 1995, p. 126). From the non-judgemental perspective of a psychotherapist, the word 'should' belongs to the domain of morality rather than emotions. It implies a moral imperative. Feelings, on the other hand, as considered in a clinical context, just *are* and one of the problems in our Anglo-Saxon culture is the routine dismissal of the legitimacy of feelings in such phrases as 'big boys (or girls) don't cry'. Thus feelings

get rejected and repressed rather than being respected, understood and accompanied.

Secondly I would want to suggest that Pattison's feeling 'non-specifically bad most of the time' could have been an example of persecutory guilt. It often comes up in my clinical work. When working with someone who is expressing a feeling like this, I raise the question: where's the evidence that you *are* bad because you *feel* bad? These universal feelings can often be traced back to abuse, especially childhood abuse. Children tend to think that everything is their fault unless it is made clear that it is not. If a child is unpredictably punished for merely being there, rather than as a consequence of some misdeed, the child believes that his or her existence is enough to feel bad. This can take years to repair and usually needs good therapy over a period of time.

It is clear that Pattison uses the ordinary meaning of guilt as the backcloth against which to define shame and, as such, I think that the distinction is valid. However it is not usually the guilt which is caused by an act of wrongdoing which blocks the creativity of those who struggle with relentless negative assumptions. This persecutory guilt also undermines self-esteem and self-efficacy. It expresses itself in the form of verbal internal attacks on the creative self. It is often associated with depression and derives from a deep sense of not having any real value or worth as a person. Pattison cites both Freudian psychoanalysis and Western Christian tradition as causes of the assimilation of shame into guilt (2000, p. 44). I agree with this analysis and believe that Pattison has done us a useful service in teasing out and challenging this devaluation of the impact of shame.

I suspect that Pattison and I would agree that chronic shame and persecutory guilt are very similar in their impact on the sufferer although the connection between shame and exposure on the one hand and guilt and a relentless internal negative voice on the other indicate a difference in the way these debilitating feelings are experienced. This connects with Pattison's recognition of the difficulty in using words to describe shame. It may be that shame dates to a pre-verbal life stage, whereas

guilt dates to the next stage, when children have language. I shall return to this in the next section, when considering Erikson's model of life stages.

Erikson's Model of Life Stages

Another framework for thinking about shame and guilt occurs in the model of life stages as developed by Erik Erikson (1965) and further elaborated by Michael Jacobs (1986). The first three life stages occur during the first five years.

Erikson uses Freud's terminology to describe the first phase of life or *oral* stage. The task of this stage is to discover a basic trust in the mother or primary care giver which leads to a basic trust in life itself. Quite often when I am working with someone who has had a bad experience at this early life stage, there is a sense of dread which cannot easily be named. Kleinian (Sayers, 2000, p. 24) understanding of the first six months describes the paranoid-schizoid phase especially around three months when baby terror needs to be accompanied kindly and safely (in our culture this baby terror may be referred to rather euphemistically as colic).¹⁰ By six months what is known as the depressive position is arrived at via many experiences of coming and going with consistent care-giving. The 'good-enough mother' (Winnicott, 1990, p. 145) knows when to fuss and when not to fuss. The baby begins to trust that the world is safe enough.

The next phase, known as the *anal* phase, involves the management of muscle control with greater mobility. In addition to the pleasure of food in the oral stage, pleasure is to be found in retention and evacuation. As Jacobs has put it, 'Properly negotiated, this stage lays the foundations of self-esteem and pride in achievement, together with the pleasure of self-expression. Negotiated less well, this stage sows the seeds of doubt, shame and inhibition' (1986, p. 61).

¹⁰ It is unsurprising that a culture which favours the suppression of feelings of grief assumes that baby terror is body-based. It is a literal way of interpreting indigestible feelings of fear or anxiety. What matters is the way in which the baby is cared for and accompanied; the baby left screaming in a pram at the bottom of the garden will experience isolation as well as terror.

The next phase or *genital* stage, when the genitals are a source of curiosity and pleasure, is a time when gender is noticed and physical differences are commented on. The child of this stage begins to learn how to share each parent with the other parent, the parents with siblings and to share in co-operative play with other children. According to Erikson, the capacity to show initiative is a result of the successful negotiation of this stage, whereas guilt is a consequence of failure. Jacobs disagrees: 'Erikson places guilt in the third stage, where it is a response more to what a person has done, than to what he is unable to do. Such clear placing of each term in different stages is nevertheless misleading, since guilt is also experienced at this [second] stage' (1986, p. 68). Jacobs also connects with an existential sense of feeling guilty which originates in very early experience.

It is worth remembering that any theory of life stages is only a framework within which to make sense of development and the possible origin of difficult feelings such as shame or guilt. In practice it is a matter of discernment with a particular patient to work out where the difficulties tend to come from. A theory of stages of development is not best understood as a linear model. It is more like a spiral with recurring opportunities to revisit early stages and repair damage done during them. The three early stages get an important chance of being re-worked during adolescence as well as later in life, especially during therapy.

One of the most useful elements of my training as a psychotherapist was a course in infant observation. This helped me to see the value of the Erikson model. The discipline of observing a baby once a week from birth to the age of two and taking part in the accompanying seminars with other observers can really help with clinical work. For example, it is possible to read clues in the behaviour of adults as they come for weekly sessions. It is often hard to distinguish between a core sense of shame or a sense of being guilty and responsible for whatever goes wrong. Sometimes there are clues in the transference to me as a parent figure, when they may expect to be exposed or judged rather as they have felt in other situations. The difference is that we can try to name what is going on and reduce the power of the early feelings. It is not that these feelings go away, more that they are understood and accompanied. This in turn leads to the internalisation of this understanding or accompanying, which grows and continues after the therapy has ended. This is one of the key ways in which change can be realised.

Conclusion

Having begun by being inclined to disagree with Pattison's use of guilt as a way of defining shame, I have come to the conclusion that if his understanding of guilt is expanded to include persecutory or chronic guilt, then there is a meeting point in the similarity between chronic shame and persecutory guilt which both undermine a person's capacity to be creative and both may originate in relational difficulties going back to early life. The difference seems to be in the presentation of these chronic states, as shame is often non-verbal, whereas guilt involves negative comments against the self.

A key question which follows on from this enquiry is whether or not such early psychological damage can be put right. The response to this may vary according to psychological or theological perspectives. I could not work as a psychotherapist if I did not believe in the possibility of change. However, within this psychotherapeutic framework, there are limits to this process. We can with help change ourselves and this may have an impact on others, but we cannot change others who are not motivated to change. Even if we recognise the need to change ourselves, we have to be committed to what is often a painful process, as the survival strategies which have served us well enough have to be scrutinised and often set aside, once they have outlived their usefulness. It takes time to discern the origin of problems such as low self-esteem and self-efficacy and it may be that the exact life stage during which things first went wrong is not the most important discernment. Understanding that problems have early origins does explain why therapy can take a long time, as the struggle to change is often up against an internal undermining self which has controlled the self for a very long time after the original abuse ended.

Within a Trinitarian theological framework, which does not preclude the use of professional psychological help, belief in the Holy Spirit as the 'Go-Between God' (Taylor, 1972) opens up a conscious sense of divine help in the process of change. In addition, as a Christian practical theologian, I am aware of the importance of

dialogue and the social context of any relationship.¹¹ I respect Pattison's insistence on the need to attend to the social context of a situation if change is to be brought about. The need to think beyond the individual is one of the reasons why I trained as a group analyst twenty years ago. Therefore, as in my earlier work, my future research will build in a group component as I seek to employ the potential for change as a basis for a prophylactic approach to the prevention of clergy burnout. The community context of ministry training may well have been crucial in the positive response of ordinands to my creative repair questionnaire.

Williams referred to 'our simple habits, things that keep us prisoner in our own relation with God, the things that set a ceiling on our growth towards God' (2009, p. 9). If some of these habits can be addressed in formation or in continuing ministerial development, then old habits may be challenged while new habits are encouraged. If both chronic shame and persecutory guilt are key blocks to the practice of creative repair then a combination of theological and psychological perspectives could make a difference.

There are various ways of exploring what prevents clergy from practising creative repair. My preliminary thoughts are that clergy may be blocked by feelings of persecutory guilt or chronic shame. These may derive from early life. I am also curious to know what habits were formed during ministry training and early ministerial practice. I wonder if an experience of being part of a research group could help the process of change. My next research task, therefore, would be to devise a way of testing out some of these thoughts with a group of volunteer clergy.

References

- Erikson, E., 1965. *Childhood and Society*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Holmes, A. C., 2009 *Choose your Companions from Among the Best*. M. A. Anglia Ruskin University.
- Horsman, S., 2012. 'Time to Pick up the Pieces'. *Church Times*, 29 June p.23.

¹¹ I welcome the recognition within practical theology of the importance of the dialogical self in ministry (Ward, 2005, pp. 135–6).

- Ison, D. (ed.). 2005. *The Vicar's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing
- Jacobs, M., 1986. *The Presenting Past*. London: Harper & Row.
- Klein, M., 1992. *Love, Guilt and Reparation*. London: Karnac.
- Lyll, D., 2001. *Integrity of Pastoral Care*. London: SPCK.
- Sunday Worship*, 2011. [radio programme] BBC Radio 4, 11 December 2011 8.10.
- Pattison, S., 1989. *Alive and Kicking: Towards a Practical Theology of Illness*. London: SCM Press.
- Pattison, S., 1997. *Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology*. London: SPCK.
- Pattison, S., 2000. *Shame*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pattison, S., 2007. *The Challenge of Practical Theology*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Rycroft, C., 1972. *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. London: Penguin.
- Sayers, J., 2000. *Kleinians: Psychoanalysis Inside Out*. Oxford: Polity.
- Taylor, J. V., 1972. *The Go-Between God*. London: SCM Press.
- Ward, F. 2005. *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision*. London: SCM Press.
- Williams, R., 2007. A Theology of Health for Today. In J. Baxter, ed. 2007. *Wounds that Heal*. London: SPCK. Ch.1
- Winnicott, D. W., 1990. *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment*. London: Karnac.
- Witcombe, J. (ed.). 2005 *The Curate's Guide*. London: Church House Publishing
- Wolfram, S., 1995. 'Category mistake'. In T. Honderach, ed. 1995. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.126.

Appendix B

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

WHAT ROLE (IF ANY) DOES GUILT PLAY IN THE PRACTICE OF CREATIVE
REPAIR BY CLERGY?

ANNE C. HOLMES SID:XXX

A paper in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for Stage 1 of Anglia Ruskin University
for the degree of Doctorate in Practical Theology

Submitted: September 2013

CONTENTS

References	ii
Abstract	iv
Introduction	1
Research Design	1
Presentation of Findings	7
Interpretation of Findings	14
Conclusion	19
Appendix 1	21
Appendix 2	22
Appendix 3	24
Appendix 4	26

ABSTRACT

WHAT ROLE (IF ANY) DOES GUILT PLAY IN THE PRACTICE OF CREATIVE REPAIR BY CLERGY?

ANNE C. HOLMES

September 2013

This paper follows on from my MA dissertation, which developed the idea of *creative repair* as a way of preventing clergy burnout, and Paper 1 in which I identified guilt as a possible block to the practice of creative repair.

In order to test out this possibility, I have designed a qualitative study with a purposive sample of volunteer clergy. I give a description of this design and its methodology, which combines a questionnaire with a focus group. I summarise the responses and describe the focus group meeting.

I present the findings of the study and analyse the data from the focus group. I identify themes, reflect on them and comment on the dynamics of the group. I note certain connecting themes.

I interpret these findings, drawing on theological sources and my experience as a psychotherapist. I conclude that the evidence of the study does not support my hypothesis that guilt is a significant factor preventing the practice of creative repair by clergy. Instead, I reflect on the roles of early personal templates and variable church structures in the practice of creative repair.

'The first key to wisdom is assiduous and frequent questioning. For by doubting we come in enquiry, and by enquiry, we arrive at the truth.' (Peter Abelard in Ward and Wild, 1997, p.62)

Introduction

The primary concern of my research is to examine the role of the creative arts in the prevention of clergy burnout. In Paper 1, I sought to take forward the ideas presented in my MA dissertation, 'Choose your companions from among the best' (Holmes, 2009). Although my earlier research indicated the value of *creative repair* in the prevention of clergy burnout, in practice there seem to be factors preventing clergy from engaging regularly with the creative arts.¹² Clues from workshops indicated that guilt might be one of these factors. Participants tended to feel guilty if they attended to their own needs rather than those of others. I concluded at the end of Paper 1 that clergy may indeed be blocked by feelings of persecutory guilt or chronic shame, which may derive from early life. I decided that my next research task would be to test out some of these possibilities with a group of volunteer clergy. Wishing to discover whether or not guilt is a significant block to the practice of creative repair, I designed a qualitative study in order to find out the dynamics going on in a purposive sample.

Research Design

The Research Question

This has emerged from my reflection on various workshops on creative repair which I facilitated during the years 2010-2012. Verbal feedback indicated that the idea of creative repair was received positively in theory and in practice during the live workshop, but would be difficult to justify when back in the ministry setting. Reasons for this were suggested as busyness, a basic assumption that clergy should be there for others before themselves and at least one member specified feelings of guilt as a block to the practice of creative repair. In Paper 1, I explored this in the context of practical theology and engaged in a critical conversation with Pattison, focusing specifically on his book *Shame* (2000). I found common ground between his idea of

¹² *Creative repair* is regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing the energy expended in sensitive pastoral care (Holmes, 2009).

chronic shame and the psychoanalytic concept of persecutory guilt. This indicated that a useful research question could be posed as follows:

What role (if any) does guilt play in the practice of creative repair by clergy?

Design of the Study

The methodology of this study is located in the qualitative approach to research (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). I decided that the combination of a questionnaire completed by a small number of clergy or ordinands followed by a focus group to explore their shared thoughts would be a useful way forward. This approach had been valuable in my MA dissertation, which initiated this whole enquiry (Holmes, 2009). I designed the questionnaire in such a way as to allow participants to reflect on the way in which they resource themselves routinely. I am drawing on the specific use of focus groups as a research methodology, as described by Litosseliti (2003) and Liamputtong (2011). Focus group methodology is described as a form of group interviewing, with a semi-structured questioning approach which depends on the participants' responses (Litosseliti, 2003, p.3). Although neither of these authors specify the use of a preparatory questionnaire, I have applied the principle of a multi-method study (Litosseliti, 2003, p.17) and a core principle in group analysis about the care needed in setting up groups (Barnes, Ernst and Hyde, 1988, pp.29-51), when deciding to send questionnaires to my participants in advance of the focus group. In choosing my participants, I have drawn on the qualitative research method of purposive sampling, as considered by Swinton and Mowat (2006) and Liamputtong (2011).

Selection of Participants

I have used the method of purposive sampling (Liamputtong, 2011, p.50) as the most appropriate way of selecting most of my participants, with a few supplementary participants selected by the method of opportunistic sampling (Liamputtong, 2011, p.53). As my general research topic is the prevention of clergy burnout, it made sense to restrict my participants to those already ordained and serving in parishes or those training to become clergy. Most of them had already taken part in one of my workshops on creative repair, whether as an ordinand, as part of a theology of work weekend training, or as a new incumbent, as part of a diocesan training, or as part of a diocesan workshop within the Continuing Ministerial Development programme. In each case the participants gave me their e-mail addresses so that I might approach them when I was ready to continue my research. These were selected by

purposive sampling. A few additional potential participants came out of conversations at various clergy meetings. These were selected by opportunistic sampling.

Process of Involving Participants

Once I had devised a questionnaire and decided to invite participants to attend a focus group, I submitted my application to the university Ethics Committee. Only after receiving permission to proceed with this study did I make an initial approach to eighteen potential participants. All but two replied after one reminder. Of the sixteen, one declined having moved to another diocese and one declined apologetically, being too busy to take part. I sent the two documents *Information for Participants* and *Participation Consent Form* to the remaining fourteen respondents with an explanation of the need for the signed consent form before I could send the questionnaire.^{13 14} Following this one person explained that she had attended the workshop as a spouse and her husband was too busy to take part. I noted that there might be a future group of participants who are clergy spouses but did not feel it appropriate to revise the purposive sampling for this study. In all, I received ten signed consent forms and sent back the questionnaire in response.

The Questionnaire

Although my particular interest was in the role of guilt as a block to creative repair, in order not to prejudice the outcome of the research, I asked more general questions about the practice of *creative repair*, having first defined it as: 'the regular engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing or replenishing the resources poured out in sensitive pastoral care.'¹⁵ "Creative" is understood as pertaining to the creative arts, i.e. literature, visual arts including photography, music and the performing arts' (Holmes, 2009). The first question was one of general enquiry to help the participants to identify what in their lives could be described as creative repair. The next four questions invited participants to reflect on the regularity of their practice of creative repair and to begin to name what hinders or helps this practice. The sixth question was designed to explore the participant's attitude to creative repair. If it were perceived as part of spiritual discipline or essential to ministerial practice, this would indicate a theoretical commitment to it. If it were seen as an unnecessary distraction or an unaffordable luxury, then there

¹³ Appendix 1

¹⁴ Appendix 2

¹⁵ Appendix 3

might be a clue to a block which may or may not be caused by guilt. The seventh question was open-ended and invited the participants to reflect generally on their experience of creative repair. The final question took the form of a log of a week's experience. Having had some clues in the answers to the previous questions as to the participant's view of the value of creative repair, I was curious to observe what this meant in practice. The different categories defined the activity, the time of day and the length of time spent on the activity. A final column asked whether or not the participant was alone during such activities. One of the factors to emerge from my previous research was the role of solitude and/or togetherness with a partner or friends. One of the points which I could tease out in the focus group could be the role of other people in the practice of creative repair. Of the ten questionnaires sent to those participants who had signed the consent form, eight were returned.

Analysis of Questionnaires

I analysed the returned questionnaires and out of that I devised the questions for my focus group.¹⁶ Litosseliti emphasizes the importance of this preparation: 'Careful design of the questions and topics to be developed during the discussion, together with experience, will help the moderator to minimize bias, by avoiding the use of leading yes/no questions, and by encouraging a balance of contributions among participants' (Litosseliti, 2003, p.22). I waited until I had received all the completed questionnaires before reading them, in order to protect a fresh response to them as a whole. I linked my findings to the rationale for choosing the questions described above and made the following observations.

Question 1, the general enquiry about creative repair, prompted a wide range of responses, taking an understanding of creative repair to be broader than the creative arts, as they included sport, walking and other physical activities. This informed a question about physical activity for the focus group. I also noticed that the answers included puzzles and games, which triggered the question about the role of these in creative repair. It also informed a question about what participants understood to be meant by the word 'creative' and whether they made a distinction between survival switch-off and deeper, more intense activities.

Only two of the eight completed questionnaires indicated that the participants managed as much creative repair as they wished, so I included a focus group question on what stopped them from doing as much as they wanted. I included a

¹⁶ Appendix 4

question about the role of guilt, in order to gain responses to my specific research question.

All the responses indicated that creative repair was essential to ministry and most affirmed it to be a matter of spiritual discipline; therefore I invited them to say more about this in order to discover any theological framework for their creative repair.

Although I hadn't asked about church structures in my questionnaire, reference to them in the responses prompted me to include them in my focus group questions.

As the questionnaire included a log of a week's activity, this log featured in my questions with a particular reference to the role of others in the practice of creative repair. I added an initial question about the experience of completing the questionnaire as an ice-breaker (Litosseliti, 2003, p.59).

Focus Group

As a focus group had been helpful in my Master's research, and as I work professionally with groups as a Group Analyst, this research method seemed to be a good match both to the research question and my skills as a researcher. I was aware that practical considerations made it unlikely that all of the participants would be able to attend the focus group. However as long as there were enough participants to ensure a rich and varied discussion, the data should serve the purpose of the research question. Most of my prepared questions were drawn from my reading of the questionnaires. These allowed me to have some structure for the discussion. However, in order to allow for some spontaneity among the group members, I tried to enable some of what the founder of group analysis, S.H. Foulkes, has called 'free-floating discussion' (1964, p.40). This approach reduces the group's dependence on the facilitator and helps shift the discussion from a more superficial reflection on the questions to greater depth of response, one of the key benefits of qualitative research. As Swinton and Mowat have put it: 'In order to understand what is *actually* going on within ... (the) situation it is necessary to understand the *meaning* of the actions ... the reasons behind the ways individuals and communities act in the particular ways that they do' (2006, p.38). Practitioners of qualitative research tend to privilege depth of communication or 'thick description' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.45), whereas practitioners of quantitative research assume the importance of numbers.

I offered the participants a choice of four possible dates for the focus group. Responses were almost equally divided, with one date possible for five people, whereas each of the other dates could be possible for four. I therefore confirmed the date on which five people could attend. As the date approached, one person gave apologies due to a change in holiday dates and another had to attend a funeral at short notice. Having consulted my supervisor, I decided to go ahead with the focus group. The three people came first for refreshments and introductions (Litosseliti, 2003, p.70). The recorded group lasted for exactly an hour and a half and there was time afterwards for more relaxed conversation and refreshments before they went home. I recorded the discussion on two digital recorders, in order to have a check and balance of the quality of the recording.

Before transcribing the recording, I jotted down some first impressions of how it had gone, while it was a fresh memory (Litosseliti, 2003, p.81). These impressions could then be tested out against the evidence of the transcription and might provide additional material for analysis. I transcribed the focus group using instructions developed by Blake Poland (quoted in Liamputtong, 2011, pp.167-68).

Presentation of Findings

Analysing the Data from the Focus Group

Themes

Using the methodology described in Liamputtong (2011, p.173) I have followed the coding method suggested by Uwe Flick (in Liamputtong, 2011, pp.173-74) by which questions such as how? what? and who? are used to establish themes from the text. I have observed about fourteen themes. I shall identify them using Roman numerals, give some examples from the transcription, then attempt to group some themes together when appropriate. I have given the focus group participants letters indicating the order of their arrival at my home: A = me, B = J1, C = J2, D = J3.

It will be observed that none of the themes includes any reference to guilt. There were fragmentary comments about guilt, but they were not sufficient to justify guilt as a theme in its own right. I shall reflect on this later after having identified the themes which did emerge from this focus group.

- I. What constitutes work and what does not

- II. The involvement of others in time off: spouse/friends
- III. How the activity helps – blotting out thoughts about the parish/pastoral issues through focus/concentration required
- IV. How the capacity to come and go from an activity can help
- V. What is meant by creative
- VI. What might make a difference. The importance of appreciation from others
- VII. The issue of accountability in the practice of creative repair and who might offer it – incumbent/spiritual director/spouse
- VIII. How the day off/Sabbath is protected. The importance of boundaries
- IX. An understanding of what makes a difference. The need to feed/be fed by others
- X. How the confidence of the minister might make a difference
- XI. The impact of fatigue/busyness
- XII. How the diocesan and local church structures impact on the practice of ministry
- XIII. The impact of beginnings
- XIV. How we might bring about change

I. What constitutes work and what does not

Members of the focus group varied in their experience of what was work and what was leisure. D reported that the questionnaire prompted her to think about what constituted work and what did not. It offered a way of categorizing her activities through the day. Some of this was the fairly obvious difference between a ministry task and a leisure activity. Within ministry tasks, however, some seemed more like pleasure than work. For B and C a sermon could be pleasurable if the biblical text seemed to offer an intuitive response, but was more of a slog if not. For D, who was dyslexic, anything involving the written word was work, whereas preparing a PowerPoint presentation was pleasurable.

II. The involvement of others in time off: spouse/friends

Although there was some mention of solitary pursuits, key activities during time off involved other people. For B and C it was important to go for walks with their spouse and for D, line-dancing involved being with friends. C played online bridge with others, sometimes with a regular partner, sometimes with strangers. B would do a

daily crossword in one part of a daily newspaper while her husband was reading the main section.

III. How the activity helps – blotting out thoughts about the parish/pastoral issues through the focus/concentration required

The amount of concentration needed for the activity, such as line-dancing or playing bridge served to blot out preoccupying thoughts about the parish or particular pastoral concerns. D said: 'When you're line-dancing, you can't think of anything else.' C said: 'It takes you away from thinking ... about the sermon or about ... this issue or that issue.'

IV. How the capacity to come and go from an activity can help

Dropping in and out of an available pastime was helpful for B and C, with examples being a jigsaw left out and short periods of time playing online bridge. D did not feel able to do this because of a more compulsive need to complete a jigsaw when it was once begun, but did say she plays an occasional game of solitaire on the computer.

V. What is meant by creative

Each group member found some aspects of ministry creative. This included putting liturgy together, celebrating the mid-week Eucharist, preparing an assembly or a Quiet Day. For B, 'The word creative means to make something, rather than just ... switch off'. D finds God 'in creation, given, I live in a very beautiful place'.

VI. What might make a difference. The importance of appreciation from others

B said that her spouse was 'a pleasure to cook for'. Feedback from sermons could be important. C said, 'There are one or two people who are listening to you and they are energized by your words.' Examples were given of ministry being valued. C quoted affirming comments such as: 'We're just so lucky to have you here' and 'That's the best baptism I've ever been in.' B said, 'They love me to bits', and described a parish in which to take a service or a funeral is 'a very affirming experience'. By contrast, in another village in B's benefice, there is a lot of negativity towards the church. B experienced a lack of support from churchwardens in one parish after a personal bereavement. All three indicated that the presence or absence of appreciation from their parishes affected their self-esteem. This

impacted on their capacity to take their own needs sufficiently seriously to practise creative repair.

VII. The issue of accountability in the practice of creative repair and who might offer it - incumbent/spiritual director/spouse

C quoted: 'What stops me from taking time for myself?' as a challenge from his spiritual director. B's previous spouse didn't know how to play but her present one was quoted as saying: 'Well, you're being creative all the time ... in your job, so why do you have to sew as well?' D's spouse used to say: 'Now's time for our time ... time that computer went off.' D's training incumbent would say: 'Don't do very much' in a quiet week to make up for busy weeks. B said that spiritual directors are 'very good at asking questions about how you are living your life'.

VIII. How the day off/Sabbath is protected. The importance of boundaries

'Friday's my Sabbath', said B and people who want a funeral taken have to choose, 'have Friday or me'. D said, 'I try and keep Monday as my chill-out day', while acknowledging rare exceptions for a funeral of someone from 'a family I know very well'. C had to challenge funeral directors whose assistants want to phone on a Friday and added, 'I protect my day off.' B once had to turn down a bribe to take a funeral on a Friday.

IX. An understanding of what makes a difference. The need to feed/be fed by others

B said, 'I want somebody else to entertain me' so that reading a book or watching a film is more restorative than getting sewing out.

X. How the confidence of the minister might make a difference

This theme was introduced by C in the context of dealing with criticism. 'So ... it's having the confidence to be able ... to say "No, actually, I'm not bad at what I do."' Later on in the focus group, in response to a comment about Christmas being their busy time, C quoted his response as: 'No, every day is busy.'

XI. The impact of fatigue/busyness

C said: 'I'm working pretty flat out, mornings, afternoons and evenings often.' This was in the context of being a full-time priest protecting his day off. B and D have six or seven Harvest Festivals. B said: 'I'm too tired to get my sewing out ... fatigue is a factor.' This was in the context of preferring something easily available for

recreation. B also thought that it is important to model a better work/life balance when so many parishioners are leading rushed lives, adding: 'You don't have to fill every waking moment being driven, with an activity.'

XII. How the diocesan and local church structures impact on the practice of ministry

B and C have had very negative experiences of these structures and D has had very positive experiences of support from them. C feels resentment about the move from freehold to Common Tenure. B and C thought that the experience of bishops and archdeacons seemed remote. D on the other hand felt very supported when her husband died and also more recently when holding the fort through an interregnum. Their experience seemed to vary according to geographical area, as C comes from a very large deanery, although he did feel supported in some aspects of ministry.

XIII. The impact of beginnings

B spoke powerfully about the way in which childhood set her template for having time off. She was only allowed to play when she had done all her jobs. As her mother had poor health, there were a lot of jobs. She made the link between this and the need to feel dutiful about being creative. All three members spoke of the beginning of their present ministry. B and C referred to doing too much at first and D's husband died soon after her ordination.

XIV. How we might bring about change

C spoke of having stopped feeling guilty about taking time off and liked my phrase suggesting that he was 'a recovering guilt addict'. B returned to her original expectation that coming to my workshop would oblige her to take out her sewing and spoke of her former partner who could not play, unlike her present husband who challenges her duty motif. C has learnt to be more contemplative on a walk with his spouse who suggests: 'Take time to smell the flowers.'

Reflection

Having identified the themes I–XIV, I observed that my original research question had not been answered in such a way as to indicate that guilt played a key role in the practice of creative repair. While I did not want to control the discussion in the focus group too rigidly, I did make sure that this question was specifically addressed. In answer to it there was some recognition that group members could

feel guilty if they turned down requests for services, usually funerals, on their day off. They could also feel guilty if they granted those requests. The sabbatarian principle was experienced as vital to healthy ministry not only on a day off, but also when part of a day became unexpectedly free. B felt guilty about not doing something creative which involved making things, such as sewing, but she also recognized that, in order to replace used up energy in, say, leading a Quiet Day, she needed to be on the receiving end of someone else's creativity. C liked my suggestion that he was a recovering guilt addict, as he had learnt through experience that he needed to take care of himself. My hunch that guilt might be a block to the practice of creative repair was therefore not borne out by the members of this focus group.

Group Dynamics

This was a small group of three members plus me as facilitator. I began by setting the boundaries of time and confidentiality. I also explained that the questions would provide a loose structure, but that I wanted the discussion to be itself. The theory behind this was that of group analysis, with its combination of safe boundaries and free floating discussion (Foulkes, 1964, p.40). Reading through the full transcript, I have observed certain group phenomena. At first the members referred more to me than to each other. As they had not met before the focus group, I was the one who had initiated the work and made the arrangements. Being together seemed to make it safe to say that they had found the questionnaire annoying or difficult. During the group I used my role to bring in those who hadn't said anything. This is classical group analysis, in which the facilitator is called a group conductor, a clear comparison with a musical conductor who brings in each of the instruments (Behr and Hearst, 2005, pp.7-8). This was not necessary later on as each group member became more confident about responding to what someone else had said. As group members became more relaxed, they were able both to agree and disagree when appropriate and to manage different perspectives. This was most noticeable in the discussion about church structures. Two people spoke heatedly about their sense of disappointment and the third person was able to put forward an entirely contrasting view. At times humour was used in an enabling way, both allowing differences between them and helping them to reflect on the way in which clergy are often misunderstood by their parishioners. Each came from a particular context, one being a full-time stipendiary parish priest, one being in a part-time House for Duty post and one being a non-stipendiary Ordained Local Minister, serving people in her own setting. Each was able to make particular points to the others (and me) about

preaching on the Commandments, a philosophy of the whole person in leisure and work, and the importance of finding God in creation.

Connecting Themes

In order to draw out what was indicated by the focus group, I have applied the method of finding trends and patterns as recommended by Litosseliti (2003, p.92) to the themes I–XIV and noted certain connecting themes as follows:

1. During the discussion, the group explored the difference between what constituted work and what did not (theme I), while reflecting on what they experienced as creative and reparative (theme V).
2. A link could be made between themes II, VII and IX, regarding the role of others in the practice of creative repair.
3. The way in which creative repair is experienced allows links between themes III, IV and VIII, highlighting the importance of protected time, whether the Sabbath day or what we might call Sabbath hours or even minutes.
4. While outside of the individual's sphere of influence, the need for compassionate and empowering structures, theme XII, might be thought of as a vital quasi-parental framework within which each of these ordained ministers was authorized to practise ministry. This would also embrace theme VII, the role of a spiritual director in offering accountability in the practice of creative repair.
5. Themes VI, X, XI, XIII and XIV indicate a link between people's underlying character, template and general mental health and their ability to engage in activities which value the self.

Having identified these links, there are a variety of avenues of interpretation which I could follow:

- a. A discussion of what is creative or resourcing and what is not.
- b. The role of the Sabbath as symbolizing protected time when off duty.
- c. The role of others in practising creative repair.
- d. The importance of beginnings, both in life as a whole and in ministry.
- e. The role of structures in both the individual's life and in the relevant ecclesial organizations.

There was no connecting theme which related directly to the role of guilt in the practice of creative repair. Therefore, in this paper, I shall focus on a, d and e, as

these perspectives seem to hold the most useful clues to the core issue of my research, namely the role of the creative arts in the prevention of clergy burnout. While not focusing on c specifically, the role of others will be included explicitly or implicitly in the consideration of a, d and e.

Interpretation of Findings

In order to interpret these findings, I have drawn partly on theological resources and partly on my experience as a psychotherapist.

a. When reflecting on the discussion of what is creative or resourcing and what is not, I have considered the way in which the active and contemplative elements of a faithful Christian life were viewed in the early Church. Paffenroth (1999) has written about the allegorizations of the active and contemplative life in Philo, Origen, Augustine and Gregory. Philo, Origen and Augustine interpreted variously the roles of Rachel and Leah in Genesis and those of Martha and Mary in the New Testament in order to privilege the contemplative life, which can be enjoyed in eternity, over the active life, which will be practised only in this life. Gregory also gives greater merit to the contemplative than the active life, but for him the active is not seen as temporal and the contemplative as eternal. Crucially for the purpose of my research, 'The successive stages of development lead to a union of the active and contemplative lives, not a replacement of the former by the latter' (Paffenroth, 1999, p.3). For Gregory, whose career spanned public service, monasticism and the church in the world, everything comes under God's jurisdiction, so that the devil and God have a deeply complementary relationship (Straw, 1988, pp.64-65). This sense of unity may have informed Rowan Williams when he wrote:

'Christian faith has its beginnings in a profound contradictoriness, an experience which so questioned the religious categories of its time that the resulting organization of religious language was a centuries-long task ... Once we have stopped drawing a distinction between "compromising" activities and spheres (the family, the state, the individual body or psyche) and "pure" realities (the soul, the intelligible world) the spiritual life becomes a much more complex, demanding and far-reaching matter.' (Williams, 1990, pp.1-2)

Gregory saw the work of God in his experience and revised his theology to affirm the complementary value of both the contemplative life and the active life. Williams echoes this more integrated view: 'the goal of a Christian life becomes not enlightenment but wholeness – an acceptance of this complicated and muddled bundle of experiences as a possible theatre for God's creative work' (1990, p.2). This would indicate that clear-cut distinctions between what is work and what is rest miss the point. If we raise the question of what are we for as human beings, then a view embracing wholeness would welcome a more open-ended view of what constitutes creative repair. Is it something that happens outside of working hours or is it rather a balance of energy which flows both within and outside of working hours? The evidence from the focus group suggests a more integrated view of what resources and what drains us and demonstrates the way in which the activities which contribute to that balance vary from person to person. For my focus group certain ministry tasks such as preparing a PowerPoint presentation for a school assembly, presiding at the Eucharist or planning a Quiet Day, would be a creative, resourcing experience, whereas what was once a pastime, such as sewing or sport, had become a duty and a draining experience. Words such as 'draining' or 'resourcing' imply energy levels. So the evidence from this group would indicate a useful redefinition of my understanding of creative repair as a lens through which aspects of work or time off could be experienced as creative repair, depending on the particular needs of the individual. The full flourishing of the particular minister would be enhanced by increased self-understanding and discipline in the practice of creative repair.¹⁷

d. When considering the importance of beginnings, both in life as a whole and in ministry, I have drawn on my training and practice as a psychotherapist. One of the important insights of psychoanalysis is the correlation between a sound emotional start in life and our capacity to manage other beginnings.¹⁸ For each one of us any important beginning echoes our very entry into the world at birth. When we come into the world we have to begin the *work* of existence. Whereas in the womb our cells just carried on multiplying and developing and we were fed automatically, after birth we have to breathe and suck and give voice to our needs. We are dependent on others to respond to our needs and we go on developing and growing. The psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott has written about the importance of the 'good-

¹⁷ See Pattison's comment on human flourishing in his foreword to Lynch (2002, p.viii).

¹⁸ The general importance of life stages was first considered within psychoanalysis by Freud and has been developed by others, especially Erikson (1965) and Jacobs (1986) among others.

enough' mother who attends to her baby, but does not anticipate his needs (Winnicott, 1965). Whatever the circumstances, the baby's primary task is to survive and we know from the work of John Bowlby (1988) that there is an instinct to attach to whoever or whatever is available to keep going. Our early life provides a template for future important beginnings. If we have been well-enough accompanied by our parents and significant others, then we will be able to draw on that experience and accompany ourselves through future transitions. Leach has written about our 'home realities ... habitual ways of seeing the world, many of which were formed in us as small children' (2007, p.65). These 'home realities' can be shaped as we see ourselves as God sees us and open ourselves to the perception of being loveable and loved. As John has put it: 'We love because God first loved us' (1 John 4:19), which suggests that we need to know that we are loved, heard and valued in order to trust and operate from this knowledge.

Nevertheless, what we cannot avoid is the repeated experience of vulnerability when we take up a new position in ministry. Preparation is crucial. Ministry does not take place in a vacuum, but in the context of a church community and could thus be described as a group experience. In group analysis careful attention is devoted both to the setting-up of a group and the future introduction of new members into the group (Barnes, Ernst and Hyde, 1999). In any new position old templates going right back to the baby's arrival in the world may reassert themselves. During the focus group, B spoke specifically about the power of her childhood template to influence her ministry practice. As a young carer, she had been denied a spontaneous movement between household tasks and play, crucial to development as the context in which a child makes sense of the world and, as an adult, she was challenged by the relentless round of ministry tasks to take time off at all. Even if she did have time off, the type of play was prescribed and even creative repair brought in a powerful sense of duty. C and D didn't speak about early experience in this way, but all three indicated that they had set up patterns of activity at the beginning of their new posts, which were simply not sustainable. If the anxiety around beginnings were better understood, then new positions could perhaps be managed in a more reflective and accompanied way.

e. When the focus group considered the role of structures in their practice of creative repair, B and C had found them to be obstructive, whereas D had an entirely different experience. On the whole, local structures such as the local church and PCCs were found to be supportive, although B felt appreciated by one parish and not by another. Responses from those with responsibilities of oversight were

unpredictable. D who was widowed very soon after her ordination experienced the structures as totally supportive both at the time and subsequently. C was very troubled by the introduction of Common Tenure and was unable to get clear responses to his questions, when he had a chance to raise them with a diocesan representative. B had suffered a major bereavement during her ministry and had received the minimum of compassion and support both from churchwardens and senior clergy.

During a post-graduate course in the group analysis of organizations, I was taught that a key factor was the importance of relevant conversations at every level.¹⁹ Applied to the Church, there would need to be more conversations which were not pre-determined by unequal power relations between the participants. As Lynch has indicated, 'if we are concerned to promote the good life through pastoral practice ... we should be concerned with the extent to which the cultural practices and social structures, within which we work, also help or hinder human well-being' (2002, p.48). Anecdotal evidence from some of my psychotherapy patients who have experienced bullying in church settings suggests that those in authority tend to pathologize the victim and offer a change of parish, rather than tackle the bully or church structures. One of the defences against anxiety experienced in organizations can be a retreat into detachment. When Menzies Lyth examined the high level of stress and anxiety chronic among nurses in a general hospital, she found that the social defence system functioned as a defence against anxiety and represented the institutionalization of very primitive defence systems, 'a main characteristic of which is that they facilitate the evasion of anxiety, but contribute little to its true modification and reduction' (Menzies Lyth, 1988, p.77). The comments made by members of the focus group seem to indicate that the capacity of the Church to manage anxiety is at best inconsistent, which may explain why the structures may let down those serving it. As B put it: 'My mother said that the Church is the only army that shoots its own soldiers', to which C added, 'And takes very careful aim before it does so.' The discrepancy between this perception and the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ suggests that the institution can be as susceptible to Lynch's 'theories-in-use' as distinct from 'espoused theories' as individuals can (Lynch, 2002, p.20).²⁰

¹⁹ Personal notes taken from lectures by Barry Curnow and Ralph Stacey (January – March 2004).

²⁰ Drawing on the work of Argyris and Schon, Lynch (1988) argues that the ideas, assumptions and values that guide the practice of pastoral carers are not necessarily the ones that are articulated to others.

Conclusion

My research question was 'What role (if any) does guilt play in the practice of creative repair by clergy?' What emerged from the focus group discussion was that while there were fragmentary references to guilt when members were protecting their time off, my hunch that guilt was a key factor preventing the practice of creative repair was not borne out. Rather than guilt, what might block creative repair could be fatigue, lack of confidence and unsupportive church structures. The members of this group indicated that a simple association between creative repair and time off did not do justice to their experience. What mattered was the self-awareness of the minister and the knowledge of what is needed at different times of day, each week, month and year. In the case of each group member, a past habit of over busyness had been modified with the help of others, who offered a framework of accountability. These could be people important in their personal lives, notably spouses and close friends or those within their ministry sphere, like spiritual directors or training incumbents. A recent report to the Methodist Conference affirms this:

'The interface between the minister's personal life and their ministerial work will be a matter for individual ministers to work out in prayerful reflection, in conversation with family and friends, lay and ordained colleagues and stewards in the circuit and in other supportive relationships such as spiritual direction or supervision as appropriate, hopefully in a healthy and sustainable way.' (Tidey, 2013, p.204)

It is becoming clear that a combination of a childhood template which fails to give a person sufficient capacity to manage anxiety in new situations and an institution which does not challenge a culture of busyness for its own sake may help to explain why clergy find it difficult to practise creative repair. Despite this, members of the focus group indicated that others could help them. For B and C their present spouse was crucial and for D her memory of her spouse was important. However, choice of a partner is not something which could be addressed institutionally. Many have found that an experience of pilgrimage can be life-changing and without doubt the metaphor of life as a pilgrimage opens up the hope of change, especially if we are accompanied. Someone in the role of a spiritual director or training incumbent can help the minister to set good patterns at the beginning of a new post. Theological help in the management of anxiety has been signposted by Tillich (1962). Primitive anxieties tend to lead to polarization or an either/or approach, whereas healthy

management of anxiety allows for a more integrated or a both/and approach. Given Gregory's perception of the 'very unity of the divine dispensation' (Straw, 1988, p.65) and the plea for wholeness to be the goal of the Christian life made by Williams (1990, p.2), a useful focus for change would be a better management of personal and institutional anxiety.

References

- Barnes, B., Ernst, S. and Hyde, K., 1999. *An Introduction to Groupwork: A Group-Analytic Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Behr, H. and Hearst, L., 2005. *Group-Analytic Psychotherapy: A Meeting of Minds*. London: Whurr.
- Bowlby, J., 1988. *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment*. London: Routledge.
- Erikson, E., 1965. *Childhood and Society*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foulkes, S.H., 1964. *Therapeutic Group Analysis*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Holmes, A.C., 2009. *Choose Your Companions from Among the Best*. MA. Anglia Ruskin University.
- Jacobs, M., 1986. *The Presenting Past*. London: Harper & Row.
- Leach, J., 2007. *Walking the Story: In the Steps of Saints and Pilgrims*. Peterborough: Inspire.
- Liamputtong, P., 2011. *Focus Group Methodology*. London: Sage.
- Litosseliti, L., 2003. *Using Focus Groups in Research*. London: Continuum.
- Lynch, G., 2002. *Pastoral Care & Counselling*. London: Sage.
- Menzies Lyth, I., 1988. *Containing Anxiety in Institutions*. London: Free Association Books.

- Paffenroth, K., 1999. *Allegorizations of the Active and Contemplative Lives in Philo, Origen, Augustine, and Gregory*. Available at:
<<http://eole.evansvilles.edu/articles/allegory.html>> [Accessed 12 April 2013].
- Pattison, S., 2000. *Shame*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Straw, C., 1988. *Gregory the Great. Perfection in Imperfection*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Swinton, J. and Mowat, H., 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM Press.
- Tidey, T., 2013. *Supporting Ministers with Ill Health*. Available at:
<<http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/media/176392/conf-2013-20-supporting-ministers-with-ill-health.pdf>> [Accessed 5 August 2013].
- Tillich, P., 1962. *The Courage to Be*. Glasgow: Collins.
- Ward, H. and Wild, J., 1997. *The Lion Christian Quotation Collection*. Oxford: Lion.
- Williams, R., 1990. *The Wound of Knowledge*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Williams, R., 2007. A Theology of Health for Today. In J. Baxter, ed. 2007. *Wounds that Heal*. London: SCM Press. Ch.1.
- Winnicott, D., 1965. *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment*. London: Hogarth.

Appendix 1

Participant Information Sheet

I am a doctoral student in the second year of a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with Anglia Ruskin University. As part of my research, I wish to conduct a pilot study on the role of guilt in preventing clergy from practising *creative repair*. Creative repair is the regular engagement with the creative arts which can prevent clergy burnout. I am inviting you to take part in this study, as you expressed an interest in helping me with further research when you took part in a workshop on creative repair during the period 2010-2012.

If you agree to take part, I shall send you a questionnaire inviting you to observe the role of creative repair in restoring the emotional and psychological resources used in your ministry over a period of a week. This might include different types of creativity e.g. reading a book, doing a crossword, watching a DVD, practising a craft/hobby.

I shall invite you to take part in a recorded focus group discussion in my house in Eynsham. I shall offer light refreshments before the discussion and there will be an informal de-briefing conversation afterwards. I shall reimburse any travel expenses.

After the group meeting, I shall transcribe the discussion and analyse it along with the completed questionnaires. Any comments will be quoted anonymously. I shall ask the group to protect the confidentiality of the discussion and the membership of the group.

If you are willing to take part in this research, please sign the attached consent form. If you wish later to withdraw your permission, you may do so.

Appendix 2

Participation Consent Form

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project: The Impact of Guilt on the Practice of Creative Repair by Clergy

Main investigator and contact details: Revd Anne C Holmes MA, XXX. e-mail XXX or XXX mobile XXX

Members of the research team: n/a

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 at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded. Group members will be asked to protect the identity of others in the group so that I accept that the researcher cannot guarantee that everyone will do this.
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 University²¹ 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.*

***Note to researchers: please amend or add to this clause as necessary to ensure that it conforms with the relevant data protection legislation in your country**

Name of participant

(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:

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____ Date: _____

²¹ "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

Appendix 3

Questions for Creative Repair

Creative repair is the regular engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing or replenishing the resources poured out in sensitive pastoral care. 'Creative' is understood as pertaining to the creative arts, i.e. literature, visual arts including photography, music and the performing arts.

1. What do you enjoy that could be described as creative repair?
2. How often are you able to engage in these activities?
3. Is it as often as you would like?
4. If not, what prevents you from practising creative repair?
5. If it is as often as you would like, what helps you?
6. Do you regard engaging in these things as:
 - (a) Spiritual discipline?
 - (b) Essential to the practice of ministry?
 - (c) An unnecessary distraction?
 - (d) A luxury which you cannot afford
7. Do you have any other comments about your experience of creative repair?

8. Please note your creative repair activity over a period of one week, noting the activity, the time of day, the length time of the activity and whether or not you were alone.

Activity	Time of day	Length of time	Alone or not
----------	-------------	----------------	--------------

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Appendix 4

Focus Group Questions

Questions drawn up after reading the questionnaires sent by the focus group participants

Opening question: How was it for you completing the questionnaire? Was it enjoyable or a bit of a chore?

I noticed each of you included some physical activity such as walking, gardening or line-dancing. How important is this aspect for you?

Those of you included puzzles of one sort or another were able to do this each day. Are you able to say how this resources you?

How do you understand the word 'creative'? Do you think that there is a difference between what might be described as survival switch-off activities and deeper, more intense activities?

I am curious about what stops you from doing as much creative repair as you would like.

- a) What do you think is the reason for this?
- b) Would feelings of guilt be a factor?

I noticed that you all see the practice of creative repair as part of spiritual discipline and essential to ministry. Could you say a little more about this? [If no reference to theology, I could ask how they would think about it theologically. Whether their theological framework helps or hinders them.]

I noticed that each of you managed to engage in creative repair for two hours most days. Was that helped by the need to fill in the log? Would it be typical of other weeks?

Do you think that the church structures are supportive in the practice of creative repair?

Some of your creative repair was enjoyed alone and some with others. Would you like to comment on the importance of each?

Appendix C

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE HEALTHY MINISTRY OF CLERGY ENGAGING
IN CREATIVE REPAIR ACTIVITIES IN A GROUP CONTEXT?

ANNE C. HOLMES SID:XXX

A paper in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for Stage 1 of Anglia Ruskin University
for the degree of Doctorate in Practical Theology

Submitted: August 2014

ABSTRACT

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE HEALTHY MINISTRY OF CLERGY ENGAGING IN CREATIVE REPAIR ACTIVITIES IN A GROUP CONTEXT?

ANNE C. HOLMES

August 2014

This paper follows on from my MA dissertation, which developed the idea of *creative repair* as a way of preventing clergy burnout; Paper 1 in which I identified guilt as a possible block to the practice of creative repair and Paper 2 in which I explored this in a qualitative study and concluded that its evidence did not support my hypothesis about guilt as a block to creative repair.

In this paper I explain my change of focus from one on the individual practice of creative repair by clergy to one of examining the impact of engaging in the creative arts in a group context on clergy's healthy ministry. I indicate the research question for my main doctoral research, grounding this in both a theological and a psychological framework. I describe the research methodology and propose a plan for the work.

Contents

Abstract	iv
Introduction	1
The Research Journey and Auto-Ethnographic Reflection	2
Good Practice in Leadership	5
The Development of My Thinking:	
Moving Beyond the Individual Paradigm	7
Generation of the Research Question	8
Grounding the Study	9
Psychological Perspectives	9
Theological Perspectives	15
Methodology	19
Research Plan	20
Originality	20
Conclusion	21
References	ii

Introduction

This research proposal has evolved from my MA dissertation, 'Choose your companions from among the best' (Holmes, 2009) in which I indicated the value of creative repair in the wellbeing of clergy. I have defined *creative repair* as regular, active engagement with the creative arts as a way of repairing the energy expended in sensitive pastoral care (Holmes, 2009). In Paper 1, I engaged in a critical conversation with Stephen Pattison's *Shame* (2000) and concluded that clergy may be blocked in their practice of creative repair by feelings of guilt. I designed a qualitative study involving a questionnaire and a focus group in order to examine this further. Having analysed the transcription of the focus group, I concluded in Paper 2 that, for this group, it was not guilt that prevented clergy from practising creative repair; rather, the explanation seemed to lie in a childhood template, which fails to give a person sufficient capacity to manage new situations, combined with institutional influences (theological colleges, dioceses) which do not challenge the culture of busyness.

What I am now trying to do is to move from a focus on the clergy person's individual creative repair in their free time, to an examination of the effects on clergy of engaging in the creative arts in a group context. After identifying a few examples of clergy who engage in the creative arts alongside others, I wish to explore the ways in which such engagement resources those involved, especially those in leadership roles.

In this paper, I explain my change of focus from one on the individual practice of creative repair by clergy to one of examining the impact of engaging in the creative arts in a group context on clergy's healthy ministry; I then indicate the research question for my main doctoral research, grounding this in both a theological and a psychological framework. Finally I describe the research methodology and propose a plan for the work.

The Research Journey and Auto-Ethnographic Reflection

I began this research as a result of the reception of my MA dissertation, which was awarded the BIAPT²² annual dissertation prize in 2010. At the conference at which I was presented with the award, various people professionally involved in practical theology research encouraged me to consider a doctorate. I had not considered it

²² British and Irish Association for Practical Theology.

until then, as I had already reached the usual statutory retirement age and had trained in and practised several professions, notably teaching, counselling, group analytic psychotherapy, and both lay and ordained ministry. The most telling argument was that if I really hoped to make a difference, then doctoral research was required. I gave this further thought and submitted a research proposal, which was accepted.

During the years between the completion of the MA and the beginning of the doctorate, I led a series of workshops on creative repair in a variety of settings. In each case I offered a seven-minute live experience of creative repair and invited the participants to consider the possibility of integrating even brief experiences into their everyday lives. This was intended to counter routine comments that they were too busy for such activities, which were perceived as recreational and an optional luxury. In some cases I was able to identify possible blocks to creative repair and one theme was that of guilt. I therefore explored this further in the first part of my doctoral research.

Since completing Paper 2, there have been a number of developments. For various reasons, I had not given a presentation of my early research to my peers on Stage 1 of the Professional Doctorate. I had not yet begun Paper 3 and was at the stage of setting up preparatory conversations described later. Having discussed it with the programme director, I decided to offer more of an experience of creative repair than a formal presentation. I drew on my previous experience of conducting workshops, except that, as the participants had already been circulated the submitted Paper 2, it seemed gratuitous to rehearse the main discussion so far. Remembering an earlier experience of using music in an academic seminar,²³ I played several pieces of music during this presentation. I brought in various *objets d'art* to offer visual stimulus while the music was being played. I invited participants to notice what went through their minds and offered this as a way of using their reflective research journal.

The presentation met with a mixed response. One confusing factor was that, due to certain circumstances, my session was allowed to run beyond the usual boundaries.

²³ As part of my qualifying course in group analysis, in 1992-4, I presented a theory paper on Creative Block using the music which John Williams wrote for the film *Schindler's List* and the haunting theme highlighted my discussion of the psychoanalytic understanding of the role of repressed grief in blocking creativity.

The feedback forms indicated a number of things from which I can learn for my future research. This was a hybrid experience, in that it was neither a formal academic seminar nor a more informal workshop in which active participation was assumed. As an improvised model, it was somewhat flawed. I played too many pieces of music for some participants. Also I did not make it sufficiently clear what I hoped to gain from the presentation. It really appealed to some participants, and if I had been clearer about exploring right-brain responses rather than the usual left-brain activity of an academic seminar, then others would have been left less confused. There was a suggestion that creative repair might be therapeutic in terms of helping people to engage with difficult emotions. This would accord with the evidence for the broader therapeutic value of the creative arts discussed below (pp.9-12). The group context of the presentation was valuable and a part of the change in my thinking which has taken place since submitting Paper 2.

In order to take my thinking further, and to find the context for my research, I engaged in a series of conversations with a variety of people who were interested in what I am seeking to explore. I had known some of them for a long time in various Anglican Christian contexts and they suggested others to me during our conversations. I decided to try a different angle. Instead of asking what prevented clergy from practising creative repair, I asked if my conversation partners knew of examples of good practice. These conversations acted as a kind of transitional space (Winnicott, 1971, p.41) in which my thinking shifted substantially.

The aim of the conversations was two-fold: to invite my respondents to react to my research so far and to create an open space for our dialogue in the moment. I hoped to get a sense of what might be going on in those church settings in which the creative arts were an integral part of the life of the Christian community. There was a total of fifteen conversations, of which fourteen were face-to-face and one by telephone. All but one were with a single person and one conversation was with a couple, each taking part individually at times. Thus there were sixteen participants, of whom: two had retired from senior episcopal posts, four were in current episcopal posts, one was involved in the selection of candidates for ordination, three were parish clergy, two were priests in or in the process of entering a religious order, one was a university chaplain and three were lay people with a close church connection, either as writers or consultants.

I took rough notes during the conversations, with the permission of my participants, as an *aide memoire*. Having reflected on them, the development in my thinking can be summarised as a recognition of:

- a. The potential impact on the healthy ministry of senior clergy of experiencing repair in a group or community setting in addition to any individual self-resourcing. I have focused on the impact of individual creative repair on the wellbeing of individuals so far in my research and have not to date made explicit my understanding of good practice in leadership.
- b. The discipline needed to set boundaries in a climate of widespread busyness and the importance of moving beyond a mechanistic view of clergy roles and tasks. Clergy health and wholeness could be enhanced by time and priority allocated to their spirituality and creative repair.
- c. The role of senior clergy in modelling good practice and affirming those clergy in their care. As many Christian denominations favour a hierarchical structure, it is incumbent on those to whom clergy are accountable to demonstrate the importance of healthy habits.

Good Practice in Leadership

I now need to name some of my assumptions about good practice in leadership. Having worked as a group analyst for over twenty years, I am committed to the importance of the social self.²⁴ Burkitt has written: “there is an alternative understanding of people within the social sciences, one based on the notion that humans are social selves” (1991, p.189). The theoretical basis of group analysis, “laid down by its initiator, S.H. Foulkes (1889-1976) involves the recognition of the deeply social nature of the human personality” (Brown and Zinkin, 1994, p.xi). Thus I welcomed the opportunity to move from a focus on the individual to that of a group or community and have become increasingly interested in the importance of creative repair in a group context and its potential impact on the awareness of the clergy person of themselves not only as a leader, but also as part of a social group.

The awareness I am interested in can usefully be conceived from a gestalt perspective (M. Taylor, 2014). The figure (in this case, the individual clergy person,)

²⁴ Group analysis has been influenced by social psychology (Mead, Erikson, Berger and Luckmann) and the Frankfurt School of social and political philosophy. The notion of the social self is linked to that of social identity. Berger and Luckmann have written: “identity is formed by social processes ... is a phenomenon that emerged from the dialectic between the individual and society” (1971, pp.194-5).

is also part of the ground (their local worshipping community; their denomination; their culture; their social group). This is also a key idea in group analysis, as indicated by Foulkes, when he wrote: "There are a variety of configurations as to what is expressed ... All this is the foreground, the figure of a process which in its totality comprises the whole group and on the ground of which meaning becomes defined, interpretation springs to life" (S. H. Foulkes, 1986, pp.131-2).

My hunch is that if clergy allow themselves to engage in a group project of some kind in which they are participants rather than leaders, they may be less burdened, in their working lives, by a perceived need to do everything themselves. I am interested to see whether for those partaking in group creative arts projects this proves to be the case.

The 'both ... and'-ness of this gestalt approach is reflected by the early Desert Fathers. In *Silence and Honeycakes* (Williams, 2003) the Desert Fathers are described as escaping the world in order to be in community. Rather than being individuals in the modern sense, the monks were persons formed in community. Williams writes: "The unusual community that is the desert monastery of the first generation is not meant to be an alternative to human solidarity, but a radical version of it that questions the priorities of communities in other contexts" (2003, p.38). Thus clergy engaging in the creative arts in a group context might have something in common with this early radical version of human solidarity, recapturing an emphasis which is easily lost in a post-Enlightenment context with its focus on the individual.

Another implication of this more social perspective on the creative arts in clergy wellbeing and good practice concerns the importance of good role models. Particularly in a hierarchical institution, there is a crucial opportunity for senior clergy to model good practice and affirm those clergy in their care. When writing about the foundational relationship between mother and baby, Winnicott indicated the need for the father (or other additional care-giver) to hold them both in a protective and supportive sense (Winnicott, 1964). Although he does not seem to have used the words 'nursing triad' himself, this idea of a triangle of care has been applied widely to other contexts, notably to that of professional supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 1989, p.3). Within institutions such as church organisations, this protective and affirming role is necessary, as was evidenced by the comments of the participants in the focus group I held, as described in Paper 2.

The Development of My Thinking: Moving Beyond the Individual Paradigm

The main shift in my approach to this research, therefore, which has taken place since I submitted Paper 2, has been from a focus on individual clergy to that of a wider community setting and from an interest purely in clergy wellbeing to an interest in clergy practice of ministry which might be considered healthy not only for the clergy person but also for those amongst whom they work. As a group analyst, I am trained to a high level in the enabling of personal psychological, emotional and social development in groups. There is abundant literature on the social context in both the theory and practice of group analysis and a growing interest in the wider implications of the social unconscious. From a Christian perspective, the value of corporate and community experience is as old as the faith itself. From the Jewish tribes in the Hebrew Scriptures to the calling of the disciples by Jesus to the broader post-Pentecost inclusion of the Gentiles, leaders have been accountable both to God and their communities. Similarly the monastic movements have always privileged the corporate over the individual.

However there has been a preoccupation with individualism in the West, particularly since the Enlightenment and this has become a dominant ethos. It has been defended, for example, by Riesman, who pointed out that such terms as 'society' and 'individual' can "pose a false as well as a shifting dichotomy" (1954, p.26). Yet this individualism can be experienced as a burden. Some years ago, I was asked to form a group of those interested in the dialogue between religion and psychotherapy. It meets monthly during the academic year. At a recent meeting the theme was the process of ageing. One member described how she and a friend had set up a group to talk about ageing, as they found that no one was willing to discuss it in other circles and especially not in churches. This reduced the sense of isolation. I know of a retired group analyst who set up a group to discuss the experience of cognitive impairment. A paper by Spiegel and Yalom on a group of women dying from metastatic breast cancer has indicated that, as the group confronted the actual death of certain members, their engagement with their own lives was energised: "many members acquired a sense of importance and found new meaning in their lives in the sense that how they lived the remainder of their lives and how they died came to seem significant" (1978, p.244).

During my series of conversations, two participants commented on the habit of many clergy of thinking that they have to do it all. The psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion

(1961) drew attention to some of the basic assumptions or collective defences against anxiety used in groups. One of them is the tendency of group members to idealise the leader.²⁵ This allows them to stay dependent, rather than take responsibility for growth and change. It is increasingly recognised that this behaviour, known as a projection, can go on in other groups, including church communities. A group analyst is trained to hand back this projection and help the group into a more functioning mode. Those clergy who are used to having to do it all play into this dynamic and thus collude with the idealisation of them as leaders. Unsurprisingly, they can very soon become exhausted. It seems to me that one key factor in burnout is this collusive omnipotence. There are other models in ministry which are more collaborative, as Heywood (2011) has indicated. If clergy are to learn to give up the habit of omnipotence, then an opportunity to engage in a shared experience such a creative arts project may help establish and maintain a new habit. Bringing together group analytic thinking and the healing role of the creative arts leads me to my research question.

There is more work to do here in the framing of this research, to draw out my conceptual framework relating to the healthy practice of ministry.

Generation of the Research Question

Reflecting on my various workshops and encounters with interested colleagues, I have come to believe that my research would be more useful if I shifted my perspective from a focus on the creative repair of clergy as individuals in their free time to more of a group focus. Does engagement in the creative arts in a group context enable clergy persons to perceive themselves as sometimes figure, sometimes part of the ground? Can they hold themselves together as part of the figure in the ground?

I have therefore identified the following research question:

What is the impact on the healthy ministry of clergy engaging in *creative repair* activities in a group context?

Grounding the Study

From a psychological perspective, I shall draw on both the evidence of the therapeutic value of the creative arts and the importance of group-analytic thinking

²⁵ The other two basic assumptions are the tendency to fight or flight and the habit of pairing in groups.

on the social unconscious. From a theological perspective, I shall consider the importance of the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of the Trinity. This will inform both the community aspects of the study and the experience of the creative arts as an aspect of God's continuing relational creativity.

Psychological Perspectives

The therapeutic value of the creative arts

The capacity for human beings to symbolise is ancient, as cave paintings such as those of Lascaux have shown us (Gombrich, 1953). Ancient texts from many cultures indicate the importance of poetry, music and dance. The power of narrative and story-telling has long been a medium for the recalling of past events, whether individual or collective, and this has been extended to practical theology (Ganzevoort, 2012). In addition to the creative arts, human capacity to symbolise is experienced in dreams and day-dreams, as evidenced by Freud and successive psychoanalysts.

Fortunately, evidence abounds for the value of the creative arts in repairing wounded psyches. At a professional level, branches of psychotherapy which have become established disciplines in their own right include art therapy, music therapy and drama therapy. As an example of the value of art therapy, I shall draw on the work of Kramer and her colleagues as described in her key text *Art as Therapy*, which includes her exploration of definitions, her emphasis on the quality of the work practised and her focus on the inner unity of process and art product "with its miraculously integrating effects on the creator" (Gerity, 2000, p.10). Gerity gives an example of a 48-year-old woman survivor of sexual abuse who was working with clay alongside others in a group. She is quoted as saying: "I could put everything into this clay – my love, my anger, my fears – and create a thing of beauty. My soul was validated in an object I could touch, feel, look at. I felt a deep sense of self-worth, and even self-love." The art therapist comments: "These patients, normally the most difficult to work with, while using clay were also clearly working on integration, feelings of wholeness and well-being" (Gerity, 2000, p.235).

This account focuses on the value of creative activity itself. However, because it was an experience that took place in a group I am also interested in how group experience affects the benefit to the participant of creative repair. Within art therapy, the social significance of art is implied in Kramer's credo as an artist and as an art therapist: "I see my tasks as an artist of our time to be twofold and interwoven: to celebrate that which is perishable and endangered, and to nourish and cultivate the

capacity for experiencing.” Troubled by the “screams and whisperings of seductive promises, admonitions and threats of the advertising industry and of politics”, she counsels us to disregard these stimuli (Kramer, 2000, p.15). Art and psychotherapy both imply a search for inner truth. All art is seen to be therapeutic in the broadest sense of the word: “Since human society has existed the arts have helped man to reconcile the eternal conflict between the individual’s instinctive urges and the demands of society” (Kramer, 2000, p.17). Although she did not experience the Nazi concentration camps herself, Kramer was deeply affected by the murders of Jewish teachers and colleagues, notably Dicken who taught art to children in the camp of Terazin. Some of Dicken’s lectures about the teaching of art to children survived along with their art “testifying to the sustaining and healing power of art” (Kramer, 2000, p.21).

From my reading and research to date there are a number of ways in which a group experience of creative repair might be understood to offer benefits to the participant beyond the creative engagement itself:

1. **Affirmation of results:** In Paper 2, I identified one of the themes to emerge from my focus group as the need for affirmation. This seemed to imply external affirmation, such as a parishioner congratulating the priest on a sermon or the appreciative comments of the bereaved after a funeral. Reading Kramer, I was struck by two writers who seem to speak to this need for affirmation. In chapter 17 on inner satisfaction and external success, Kramer writes about her observations in a private school in New York’s Bohemian Greenwich Village. Hard work was not rewarded with loving approval unlike in Vienna’s Bohemian circles. “Unless some recognition came forth through praise from persons in authority or via academic honors or financial success, people seemed to lose confidence in the value of their achievements” (2000, p.224). She goes on to draw on the work of Maria Montessori who “described the phenomenon of the ‘second wind,’ the unexpected resources of energy that become available after one overcomes the first feelings of fatigue or distress and persists in one’s task. This holds true for climbing a mountain as well as for painting a picture. Indeed all important achievements are attained via the second wind” (Kramer, 2000, p.226).

2. **Affirmation of self-expression:** In a useful summary in the same chapter, Haeseler writes: “Many of us can experience inner satisfaction when we have received, in the formative years, a large enough dose of the unconditional approval of the original good-enough mother, who for the rest of our lives can be present to us as a benign oneness with the world (Winnicott 1971), a sense that our actions and essence have meaning and value” (Haeseler, 2000, p.227). She refers to the possibility of creating a storehouse or resources on which to draw. In my own work with patients I sometimes help a person actively to begin to create a symbolic storage chamber of good experiences to use as a resource in more challenging times. At first this has to be done artificially as their internal world is usually one in which many good experiences get attacked by negative internal objects. Haeseler’s work was with adults diagnosed with schizophrenia and other major psychiatric illnesses and she identifies the role of groups in building a sense of inner satisfaction for those with psychosis. She encouraged them to show their artwork beyond the art therapy group, in public places, so that they came to recognise that they were contributing in a meaningful way to their community.

If, as the research conducted for Paper 2 seems to suggest, for some clergy a childhood template that does not value self-expression is part of the reason why they succumb to a culture of busyness in the church, it may be that the opportunities for affirmation that a group experience affords is part of its value. It would be worth discovering whether those clergy participating in group or community experiences of the creative arts found that they and other participants grew in personal and corporate confidence. If there were sufficient inner resources via creative repair, clergy could perhaps be less prone to loss of energy and resilience. In addition, by being participants in a group, they have respite from the leadership role, which may in turn help them to set aside the habit of omnipotence. Thus the practice of creative repair in a group setting may both enhance their wellbeing and support a flexible approach to ministry.

The social unconscious

A second body of psychological literature that grounds my thinking about the potential value of the group creative experience concerns the social unconscious. As a group analyst I value the social dimension of therapeutic work both at a conscious and an unconscious level. Various group analysts have considered the

nature of the social unconscious, in particular when discussing large group experiences.²⁶ I had a formative experience in Heidelberg in 1993 at a European Symposium of Group Analysis, when a special interest group met to engage with the German/Jewish experiences of the 1930s and 1940s.²⁷

Foulkes believed that the unconscious mind of a person is always a socially unconscious mind in its origins, content, development and maintenance as well as being the continuing representation of biological needs, drives and instincts. The thinking of Elias influenced his understanding of the dynamic of the social in individuals and groups (E. Foulkes, 1990, pp.251-2). More recently, Hopper and Weinberg (2012) have edited a book on the social unconscious in persons, groups and societies. One of the contributors to this volume, Ormay, has expanded his idea of the social self, which he calls the 'nos', the 'we' which coexists with the 'I', the individual ego (Ormay, 2012). Bringing together this group analytic thinking and the use of groups in the creative arts therapies, there is a strong case for moving beyond the individual in a consideration of the value of creative repair. This also resonates with an important strand of thinking within the theory and practice of pastoral care, and could be regarded as an application of the established recognition of the need for community thinking in pastoral care. O'Connor (1975) has suggested that the process of becoming is more than an individual journey. Pattison has drawn on Liberation Theology in making a case for changing the power imbalance in pastoral settings (1997). McLure (2010) challenges pastoral carers to be more prophetic and proactive in seeking to change structures and organisational practices which perpetuate injustice. She questions the habitual attitude to individual and social needs as being at odds with each other.

Group analysis is a proven methodology for this integration of the needs of the individual and the needs of the group. One group analytic writer about the social unconscious, Wilke, is unusual in privileging the social over the psychological in his thinking, arguing that "there are no individuals, groups or society without a relationship between them in time and space and without language, habits, ideologies and rituals" (Wilke, 2011, p.239). Thinking beyond the individual

²⁶ A recent volume of the journal *Group Analysis* (vol. 47, no. 2, June 2014) is almost completely devoted to this.

²⁷ I was the only person attending who was neither German nor Jewish and was intentionally there to represent Christianity with its history of ambivalence towards the situation and past tendency to blame the Jews for the death of Jesus. It felt as if there was a shift in the cross-cultural and historical social unconscious as painful experiences were named and damaged collective objects were partially repaired.

paradigm, I would want to include the trans-generational aspect of all therapeutic work, which cannot but impact on the long-term social context. I used to say to trainee counsellors that, applying the thinking of Erikson (1965), if parents are willing to face death, then their children can face life. Or, as a dying patient recently said to me, reflecting on our work together, “The buck stops here.”

In his introduction to Ormay’s recent book, Hopper writes that the author “regards the ‘nos’ as a kind of ‘life instinct’ as opposed to a ‘death instinct’. This is a thoughtful reference to those features of human groupings that are life enhancing and facilitating. After all, Group Analysis does not regard human groupings as depleting and restraining” (Hopper, 2012, p.xi). Ormay writes that “in the social unconscious we find social types that are different in different societies ... They mean ... ‘ideals’ for us that we can choose, consciously or unconsciously, and to become a person means to consciously develop in their direction” (2012, p.74).

If clergy persons choose to participate in creative arts projects in a group context, and if my research is able to show that this contributes not only to the full flourishing of those who participate, but also to a healthy practice of ministry, then future clerical social types could become less individually focused and thus less likely to suffer from burnout.

Theological Perspectives

Theology

In thinking about how and why a social dimension of creative repair might be beneficial to individual participants, as a Christian and a priest I now want to turn to some theological resources.

Until I encountered John Taylor’s seminal text on the Holy Spirit (1972), I was puzzled by what seemed to be the relative paucity of literature on this core component of the Trinity.²⁸ John Taylor reflected the doctrinal gap at the time: “The whole of our uneasy debate about the meaning of the word ‘God’ for modern man cries out, I believe, for a recovery of a significant doctrine of the Holy Spirit. That is where we must now begin our talk about God – God working anonymously and on the inside: the beyond in the midst” (1972, p.5). Although recognising it as something of a period piece, “bold in its liberal outlook, non-inclusive in its

²⁸ Looking along theology shelves in bookshops and libraries, I was struck by the lack of books devoted to the Holy Spirit, compared to the number of those on God and Jesus.

language”, Ward affirms the lasting value of this key text (2005, p.95). Reading John Taylor and subsequent theological engagements such as that of Gorringer (1990), I began to have a theological framework for my understanding of the Spirit of God. I intend to draw on this as part of the theological underpinning of my doctoral research. “The Holy Spirit is the source of community and the Spirit’s work is more related to the building of community than to the edification of the isolated individual” (Wallis, 2004, p.163).

Ward values the way in which John Taylor “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 self ... The go-between God is intimately concerned with the complexities, joys and difficulties of human relating, fully in the midst of the interplay of encounter” (2005, pp.95-6). Having quoted John Taylor on the quality of real listening and real looking, she comments: “The go-between God is to be discerned exactly in such encounters, when self cannot fail to be moved by the truth of the other which addresses the self and calls for a response ... The presence of God is to be discerned here, in the space of the encounter” (p.96).

Reflecting on the space in which learning comes from interplay and exploration so important to supervision, Ward cites John Taylor’s Trinitarian statement: “Every time I am given this unexpected awareness towards some other creature and feel this current of communication between us, I am touched and activated by something that comes from the fiery heart of the divine love, the eternal gaze of the Father towards the Son, of the Son towards the Father” (p.97). She considers that the Trinity “can be thought of in terms of ‘perichoresis’ – ‘dancing around’ – a word that describes a dance that sustains distance in intimate connection” (p.97).

This brings to mind the Matisse 1910 painting, *Dance II* (Rizzi, 2014, pp.44-5). As I was writing this, I watched two small children, aged about five and three, delighting in jumping up and down in a puddle in their wellingtons. It was the day of the annual carnival in my village, so that later the panoply of bands, floats and Morris dancers paraded through the streets. It was Winnicott (1971) who identified the importance for play for children as a vital opportunity to work things out and manage them. Many individuals and groups have worked towards this annual village event, in which the community-as-a-whole engages in creativity. Winnicott drew a direct

connection between the child's capacity for healthy play and the adult capacity to engage in creativity (1971, p.54).

Rowan Williams seems to embrace these ideas of relatedness and creativity when he writes: "Theology is the art of tracing how God transforms the flesh by creating living relationship with God, and through that living relationship with the rest of what God has made" (2007, p.5). Elsewhere he cites the Russian theologian Lossky, for whom "'person' is always the mysterious uniqueness that defies any definition ... So the realm of the personal is that realm in which what I am, unique, mysterious and distinctive, comes into relation with what is unique, mysterious and distinctive in you. Each of us then makes the other yet more unique and mysterious and distinctive in the process of encounter" (Williams, 2003, p.101).

Doctrine: The Trinity

As a Franciscan, I value the thinking of St Bonaventure on the nature of the Trinity (Delio, 2001). Drawing on the theology of Pseudo-Dionysius and Richard of St Victor, Bonaventure clarified the meaning of God as ultimate goodness and love (Delio, 2001, p.43). The first principle of the Godhead is the Father, infinitely rich in goodness, the fountain-full of goodness which is self-diffusive (Delio, 2001, p.44). The Father totally and absolutely communicates that goodness to another. This is a coincidence of opposites: the Father is fountain-fullness of goodness *and* totally self-communicative or self-emptying (*kenotic*) by nature of the good. Because the Father is this mysterious coincidence of opposites, all opposites in reality are grounded in this mystery of emptiness and fullness. Only because the Father is the infinite source of goodness can the Father be poor or self-giving as the infinite gift of goodness (Delio, 2001, p.45).

Bonaventure describes the Son as being generated by nature of the Father's goodness. The Son is everything the Father is in One other than the Father. The relationship between the Father and the Son, in Bonaventure's thought, is the very ground of all other relationships. Both the Father and the Son are totally self-emptying and turned towards the other. Bonaventure prefers the title 'Word' for the Son as all the eternal ideas of the Father are expressed in the Word. The Word is the One through whom all the Father's self-communications take place. (Delio, 2001, p.47). Everything that has existed since the beginning of time, everything that exists, and everything that will exist in the future, is grounded in the one Word of God.

Bonaventure claims that creation flows out of the deep intimate relationship between the Father and the Son. This relationship is completed in the divine person of the Holy Spirit. Returning to the notion that God is love, the perfection of love requires three persons: the source of love (the Father), the emanation of love proceeding from pure liberality (the Son) and the sharing of that love which proceeds as an act of will (the Spirit) (Delio, 2001, pp.48-9). Bonaventure sees the relationship between the Father and the Son in terms of such great intimacy that the Spirit proceeds from them as from one great principle. As the fruit of mutual love, the Spirit is 'gift'. The gift of the Spirit reveals to us God's freedom to love. "Indeed, the fact that the Spirit is given to each of us personally means that God loves us freely and personally" (Delio, 2001, p.49). God breathes through each of us through the gift of the Spirit and loves each of us in a total and absolute way. Because of this love we are caught up in the mystery of love between the Father and the Son. Each one of us is a word in whom the Father's love is expressed. This is an incomprehensible mystery for us to grasp and it is only through the Word incarnate, Jesus Christ, that the mystery becomes intelligible and meaningful in terms of our relationship to God.

Fiddes echoes the thinking of the early church Fathers, when he writes: "There is no other God than the one who is open to others in outward-going love, and the God who *makes* communion in the world must already *be* communion ... the God of salvation lives eternally in relationship" (2000, pp.6-7). Pressing the point, he adds, "Our experience of ourselves and others must always be understood in the context of a God who is present in the world, offering a self-communication which springs from a boundless love (p.8). Fiddes tracks (and regrets) the move towards individualism after the early church Fathers via Boethius, then the Enlightenment and Descartes. In the last century Buber and Macmurray reclaimed the essential social nature of our life in relationship with others. For them individual persons cannot be made in the first place without the social context of the kind of neighbour-love to others found in the parables of Jesus. For Fiddes, "If the universe is relational in nature, then society in some sense pre-exists the individual within it" (2000, p.19). A true sense of interdependence comes from holding relatedness and relationship together. Fiddes draws a distinction between the personal and the individual, arguing that being personal transcends being an individual as it inhabits the space of the 'between-ness' of communication.

My understanding of the work of God's Holy Spirit within the ecology of the Holy Trinity, therefore, leads me to want to investigate the experience of the creative arts as an expression of God's continuing relational activity.

Conceptual framework

By bringing together the insights drawn from the creative arts therapies and group analysis and the theological perspectives of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity, I have named the conceptual framework that will help me both to design and interpret my research project. I now turn to examine the research design.

Methodology

I now wish to identify clergy with a leadership role who participate in the creative arts in a group setting. The appropriate methodology would seem to be that of a case-study approach. Case studies have a long history in my psychotherapy discipline, as it was the preferred method used by Freud and successive psychoanalysts to illustrate their thinking and develop their theory. They were working with individuals, but group analysts have also illustrated theory by drawing on their experience of conducting groups. In training, conferences and study days, examples are quoted anonymously or with the permission of participants. At times, for example in teaching about therapeutic communities, members of the community may assist in the presentation given by the group analytic tutor. I would hope to use this group analytic lens while conducting the research according to recognised methods advocated by such practitioners as Simons (2009) and Thomas (2011).

Method

Thomas states that the case study is "not a method in itself. Rather, it is a focus, and the focus is on one thing, looked at in depth and from many angles" (2011, p.9). Methods are chosen to help the researcher to inquire into the subject. I wish to look at the way in which active involvement in the creative arts in a group context resources clergy in leadership roles. Using purposive sampling, I will begin with a letter of invitation to the clergy in one diocese of the Church of England. I shall then invite a small number of those who respond to do two things: firstly to ask one or two people from their ministry setting take part in a recorded focus group about healthy ministry; secondly to take part in one-to-one recorded, structured interviews of about an hour about the impact of their engaging in creative repair in a group context on their healthy ministry.

Research Plan

First I will get diocesan permission to e-mail clergy to invite them to take part in my research, giving examples of their engagement in creative repair in a group setting (e.g. choir, orchestra, art group, theatre group), preferably outside of their parish. I shall draft a letter for participants, explaining the purpose and parameters of my research and seeking their consent to engaging in my project. Meanwhile I shall design the study and draw up appropriate questions for the focus group and structured interviews. I shall seek Ethics approval for these documents before beginning the formal research project.

I intend to analyse the data I record using the coding method suggested by Flick (Liamputtong, 2011, pp.173-4) and thematic analysis (Simons, 2009, pp.135-6; Thomas, 2011, pp.171-3). I shall then discuss the data in the light of the conceptual framework outlined above, drawing appropriate conclusions and pointing to further areas of work.

Originality

In my MA dissertation, and subsequent published paper (Holmes, 2011), I identified the concept of *creative repair* as a unique bringing together of ideas from different disciplines and thus an original contribution to the debate. This highlighted the experience of the individual minister and drew on some of the substantial canon of psychoanalytic literature. So far as I am aware, no one has sought to draw on the theory and practice of group analysis in considering the place of the minister in community in the context of the role of the creative arts in the building-up of ministers and others in order to enhance their full flourishing and thus protect them from burnout. I hope that a detailed study of these dynamics will help both the Church as an institution and individual clergy to value such groups and invest in them, both as a practical tool to support ministerial wellbeing, and as a prophetic 'waste of time' within a 24/7 productivity-driven culture.

Conclusion

In this paper I have summarised my research so far as described in my MA dissertation and in Papers 1 and 2 of Stage 1 of the Doctorate in Practical Theology. I have explained the shift in my thinking about the role of the creative arts in the prevention of clergy burnout, i.e. from a focus on the individual to one on group activity and its impact on healthy ministry. Having named the conceptual framework that will help me to design and interpret my research project, I have indicated a

case-study methodology and a method of analysis and interpretation of my data. I now wish to engage in this original piece of qualitative research in order to contribute to the understanding of well-resourced ministry.

References

- Bion, W., 1961. *Experiences in Groups*. London: Tavistock.
- Berger, P. L. and Luckmann, T., 1971. *The Social Construction of Reality*. London: Penguin.
- Brown, D. and Zinkin, L., 1994. *The Psyche and the Social World*. London: Routledge.
- Burkitt, I., 1991. *Social Selves*. London: Sage.
- Delio, I., 2001. *Simply Bonaventure*. New York: New City Press.
- Erikson, E., 1965. *Childhood and Society*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Fiddes, P., 2000. *Participating in God*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Foulkes, E. ed., 1990. *Selected Papers of S. H. Foulkes*. London: Karnac.
- Foulkes, S. H., 1986. *Group Analytic Psychotherapy*. London: Karnac.
- Ganzevoort, R. R., 2012. Narrative approaches. In: B. J. Miller-McLemore, ed. 2012. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Malden, MA, and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. pp.214-23.
- Gerity, L., 2000. In: E. Kramer, ed. 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley. Preface, and Ch.17, pp.232-7.
- Gombrich, E. H., 1953. *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon.
- Gorringe, T., 1990. *Discerning Spirit*. London: SCM Press.
- Haeseler, M.P., 2000. In E. Kramer, ed. 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley. Ch. 17, pp.227-30.
- Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R. 1989. *Supervision in the Helping Professions*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Heywood, D., 2011. *Re-Imagining ministry*. London: SCM Press.

- Holmes, A. C., 2009. *Choose your Companions from Among the Best*. MA. Anglia Ruskin University.
- Holmes, A. C., 2011. 'Choose your Companions from the Best'. *Practical Theology*, 4(1), pp.67-81.
- Hopper, E. 2012. In: Ormay, A. P. T., 2012. *The Social Nature of Persons*. London: Karnac. Series Editor's Foreword, pp.xi-xiv.
- Hopper, E. and Weinberg, H., eds. 2011. *The Social Unconscious in Persons, Groups and Societies, Volume 1: Mainly Theory*. London: Karnac.
- Kramer, E., 2000. *Art as Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Liamputtong, P., 2011. *Focus Group Methodology*. London: Sage.
- McLure, B. J., 2010. *Moving Beyond Individualism in Pastoral Care and Counseling*. Eugene, OR: Cascade.
- O'Connor, E., 1975. *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Ormay, A. P. T., 2012. *The Social Nature of Persons*. London: Karnac.
- Pattison, S., 2000. *Shame*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Riesman, D., 1954. *Individualism Reconsidered*. New York: The Free Press.
- Rizzi, J., 2014. *Matisse*. London: Tate.
- Simons, H., 2009. *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: Sage.
- Spiegel, D. and Yalom, I. D., 1978. 'A Support Group for Dying Patients'. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 28(2), pp.233-45.
- Taylor, J. V., 1972. *The Go-Between God*. London: SCM Press.
- Taylor, M., 2014. *Trauma Therapy and Clinical Practice: Neuroscience, Gestalt and the Body*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Thomas, G., 2011. *How to do your Case Study*. London: Sage.
- Wallis, J. 2004. In: H. Ward and J. Wild, eds. 2004. *Resources for Preaching and Worship: Year A*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press. p.163.
- Ward, F., 2005. *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision*. London: SCM Press.
- Wilke, G., 2011. In: E. Hopper and H. Weinberg, eds. 2011. *The Social Unconscious in Persons, Groups and Societies, Volume 1: Mainly Theory*. London: Karnac. Introduction to Part V, pp.235-41.

Williams, R., 2003. *Silence and Honeycakes*. Oxford: Lion.

Williams, R., 2007. A Theology of Health for Today. In: J. Baxter, ed. 2007. *Wounds that Heal*. London: SCM Press. Ch.1.

Winnicott, D., 1964. *The Child, the Family and the Outside World*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Winnicott, D., 1971. *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock.

Appendix D

Participant Response Letter and Information Sheet

Thank you for responding to my initial letter inviting you to participate in my research into the impact on the practice of ministry of clergy engagement in *creative repair* activities in a group context. As I indicated in the initial letter, I would like you firstly, to ask one or two people from your ministry setting to take part in a recorded focus group discussion about healthy ministry; secondly, to take part in a one-to-one recorded, structured interview of about an hour about your experience of healthy ministry.

After the focus group discussion and structured interview, I shall transcribe the discussions and analyse them. Any comments will be quoted anonymously.

If you are willing to take part in this research, please sign the attached consent form. If you wish later to withdraw your permission, you may do so at any time.

Please would you also invite one or two people in your ministry setting to take part in the focus group discussion about healthy ministry, ask their permission and forward me their contact details, so that I may send them a consent form to sign.

I need to arrange the focus group as soon as possible, so please would you sign the consent form and let me know the name(s) of focus group participants by 7 December 2014.

If at any point during this research you were to become distressed as an unintended consequence of either the focus group discussion or the structured interview, you may contact Mrs Sheila Millard for a professional, confidential conversation, for which there would be no charge. Her contact details are XXX (leaving a message for Sheila Millard) and XXX, (addressing the e-mail to Sheila Millard).

Thank you for being willing to help my research.

The Revd Anne C Holmes MA

Appendix E

Participation Consent Form

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project: The impact on the practice of ministry of clergy engagement in *creative repair* activities in a group context.

Main investigator and contact details: Revd Anne C Holmes MA, XXX. e-mail XXX or XXX mobile XXX

This anonymised data will be shared with my doctoral supervisor(s).

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 at any time, 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 understand that any personal data of mine will be kept according to the Data Protection Act and that I have the right to request to see it.

Name of participant

(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:

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F

Questions for semi-structured interviews with clergy participants

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research and for signing the participation consent form. In your response to my invitation you indicated that you

- a. sing in a choir.
 - b. play in a band and an orchestra.
 - c. belong to a theatre group.
 - d. until two years ago were a member of a photography group which you had once set up.
-
1. Perhaps I could start by asking you how long you have been ordained in the Church of England?
 2. Can you tell me something about your varied experiences of ministry so far? For example, what sorts of challenges have you encountered?
 3. You said that you engage in (a. b. c. or d.). How long have you been interested in it?
 4. How has being in ministry impacted on your engagement in (a. b. c. or d.)?
 5. What do you consider to be the benefits to you personally of engaging in this?
 6. Have you noticed any difference to you personally when you have been unable to engage in it?
 7. What do you consider to be the benefits to your ministry of engaging in this?
 8. Have you noticed any difference to your ministry when you have been unable to engage in it?

9. Can you say something about the difference that it makes that you join others who share your interest?
10. Is there anything else which resources you in this way?
11. What would you say constitutes 'healthy ministry'?
12. How would you think about it theologically?
13. To what extent has your membership of (a. b. c. or d.) been a contributory factor to your experience of healthy ministry or your thoughts about what healthy ministry is?
14. What do your family, friends, parishioners, bishop feel about you spending time doing this?
15. As you think back over the conversation we have had about your experience of ministry and of a. b. c. or d., is there anything which you would like to add or anything which you feel should be explored?

Thank you for taking part in this research. I shall transcribe the interviews myself. Any quotations from my data will be anonymised. Feel free to ask me any questions.

Appendix G

Categories drawn from initial codes

1. Role in ministry and view of it [R]
A: 1,6,7,18,25,38,39,44
B: 1,25,44,45
C: 1,26,34,45,46
D: 1,11,12,15,28
2. Ministry setting and its demands/features [M]
A: 2,3,20
B: 2,7,8,10,15,27,41
C: 2,4,6,19,27,43
D: 2,3,13
3. Vocation and way of life [V]
A: 11,22,33,38,40
B:
C:
D: 42,43
4. Relationships within ministry setting [Rps/M]
A: 4,5,43
B: 3,4,5,36,42,44
C: 5,7,8,15
D: 4,5,29,46,50
5. Relationships with others including family [Rps/O]
A: 10,19,25,30,41,42
B: 22,23,29
C: 3,11,12,29,33,44
D: 54,55
6. Personal growth and self-understanding [P/S]
A: 8,23,26,34
B: 6,15,16,,17,19,26,30,32,43
C: 14,22,28,30
D: 22,30 35 48

7. Particular creative activity and its importance to the participants [C/I]
A: 9,12,16
B: 9,11,13,18,28
C: 9,17,24
D: 6,7,8,9
8. Attachment to group [A/G]
A: 13,14,31
B: 21,24,34
C: 10,18,21,25
D: 31,33,34,37,56,57
9. Health and well-being [H/W]
A: 24,32
B: 12,31 35 37 38
C: 23,31,32,35,37
D: 14,19,20,24,25,26,32,36,49,51,53
10. Theological underpinning [T]
A: 36,37
B: 39,40
C: 36,40,41,42
D: 41,45,47
11. Creativity/Spirituality [C/S]
A: 17,21
B: 14
C:
D: 21,27,44
12. Role of regularity and boundaries to protect time off [Rg/B]
A: 15,27,28,29
B: 20,33
C: 13,20,38,39
D: 10,16,17,18,19,23,38,39,40,52